

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.

WORD COUNT: 4017 plus 1000 equivalent for Appendices

Incidents which we recall only to dismiss as trivial are often a good indicator of criticality because the very fact that we have recalled them means that there is probably something important about them.
(Tripp, 2012, p.35)

This assertion is certainly true of the case study referred to in the observation notes (appendix A), as reflection on this event served to transform it from the initially innocuous interaction between two classmates to a live exemplar of many esteemed learning ideologies. The effects of teaching experienced at school can resonate for a lifetime and for this reason it is vital that practitioners are able to honestly reflect on their practice with the intention of truly comprehending the learning and teaching that occurs in their setting, making adjustments accordingly. Moore (2004, p.101) highlights the benefit of combining reflection with an appreciation of the “relevant educational theory and research” so that the teacher may “address issues not restricted to the ‘what’ and ‘when’ of education but embracing also questions of ‘how’ and even ‘why.’” It is the intention in this assignment to examine the case study of appendix A in this manner, exploring the relationship between the observed incident and recognised educational research, and building any resulting learning into future practice.

The nature of critical incidents in the classroom, being everyday occurrences prior to further analysis, means that the geography and demographic of the school involved are not necessarily a factor in the consideration of the observed event; however, the following information provides a degree of context. In accordance with (BERA 2018) guidelines, the school where the observations were undertaken will be referred to as “School X” and the key participants in the specific case study (appendix A) as “Child 1” and “Child 2,” respecting the privacy rights of all parties. The gathering and recording of information for this study was undertaken with ethical considerations as a priority. Consent for the interaction between Child 1 and Child 2 to be recorded in field notes was obtained from the participants after observation of the event, with the understanding that the observer wished to remember and be able to recall the details of their discourse. They were informed that these notes could

then form part of further study for a teacher in training. Overarching consent for observation had been provided by the school for the purposes of this study. The school is situated in a small town on the outskirts of an industrial city in South Wales and is an English-medium primary school with provision for ages 3 to 11. The most recent recorded data shows 293 pupils enrolled at School X and a Free School Meals percentage of 27.7% which is nearly 10% above the national average. The school is categorised as being in the Yellow support category by Estyn (Welsh Government, 2018a). The children observed were all from a year one class of mixed ability and were all aged five years.

The critical incident to be discussed, as described in Appendix A, occurred almost 'accidentally' in that events unfolded without a formal observation setting being established beforehand. There was, however, an intention on the part of the researcher to capture learning events for possible scrutiny as a case study, and an adapted field notes record (Fletcher-Wood, 2016, p.125) was available for this purpose immediately after the interaction between the participants. This form of direct observation, as discussed by MacLaren-Chorney and Gorodzinsky (2017), enabled valuable "real-time (p138)" behaviour to be witnessed in as naturalistic an environment as possible, without the subjects being influenced by visible recording. The 'Hawthorne Effect,' (New World Encyclopaedia, 2017) where the behaviours exhibited in subjects who are aware of being observed are thought to be influenced by the knowledge of an observation taking place, was therefore not a significant factor, and the interaction observed may be considered authentic. Cohen et al. (2011, p.298), with reference to Bailey (1994), point out that in the more natural setting of the classroom it is difficult for a researcher "who wishes to undertake covert research not to act as a participant," their presence being otherwise inexplicable. In the instance of this case study the researcher was briefly a participant observer in the sense that they acted as stimulus by posing a question, but the subsequent action occurred only between the two children, with the observer playing no further part in the discourse. There is also argument to suggest that in the event of Child 1 and Child 2 being overtly aware of being observed, any resultant "performance" in their interaction is not necessarily a negative consideration but may "reveal profound truths about social and/or cultural phenomena." (Monahan & Fisher, 2010)

The observation field notes completed immediately after the event allow multiple re-visits to the details to enable more in-depth analysis and interpretation. Access to full, descriptive notes is key to providing an engaging and interrogative case study and the spontaneous nature of the critical incident also suits the case study method. Kumar's (2011) definition of the design of a case study as "extensively exploring and understanding rather than confirming and quantifying (p.127)," reflects this. The researcher did not set out to

investigate specific behaviours or classroom phenomena in order to draw conclusions applicable to one location or population, rather to capture events of interest for further consideration. The case study as a research method has both advocates and detractors as outlined in Cohen et al. (2011), with strong roots in reality and the unique nature of the subject matter considered to be amongst the perceived advantages and lack of possible external verification and therefore potential for bias amongst the disadvantages. When related to appendix A, the primary disadvantage is that the case study is based on a short-term observation which only provides a single snapshot of an interaction that sparked considerable interest in the observer. A longitudinal, or even cross-sectional approach would have provided further opportunity to establish if Child 2 would act in a similar way with different subject matter, which would be of interest to the researcher. Conversely, the case study method offers an opportunity to delve deeper into the behaviours exhibited in the observation, which is itself a rich source of material for discussion. The short-term direct observation and subsequent case study methods selected are valuable in this instance as the environment and participants were unfamiliar to the researcher. The intent was to gain an overview of the diverse learning taking place within School X through a total of four observations, (appendices A, B, C & D) with one selected for further critical evaluation, and these methods are therefore fit for purpose.

As previously mentioned, the geographical location of School X is not necessarily relevant to the type of exchange that occurred in Appendix A, however, the fact that School X is in South Wales does have implications of its own. The educational curriculum in Wales is currently undergoing an extensive review, (Donaldson, 2015), with the intention of delivering a new, experiential learning-based curriculum from 2022. The proposed curriculum is constructed around four purposes, one of which, for children and young people to become “ambitious, capable learners who are ready to learn throughout their lives,” (Donaldson, 2015, p. 29) seems particularly salient in relation to the critical incident in Appendix A.

Child 1 was occupied with building with wooden blocks as part of the Foundation Phase enhanced provision and was clearly drawing on some prior knowledge as the house being constructed included such features as a “pizza oven.”(Appendix A) The child’s natural curiosity was piqued by the researcher picking up the challenge cards, which were a new addition to the area, and although Child 1’s level of literacy meant that they were unable to read all of the suggested activity, there was sufficient interest in the concept for Child 1 to want the cards to be read out. The identification of the anomalous ‘space themed’ challenge and the subsequent question from the researcher triggered the intervention of Child 2. Child 2’s wealth of topic-specific knowledge combined with the desire and ability to share and explain it, clearly identifies Child 2 as one of Donaldson’s “ambitious, capable learners” as

they demonstrated several of the desired behaviours. Child 2 was also able to engage Child 1 in learning through enthusiastic collaboration, thus aiding a peer to develop in line with the proposed curriculum purpose. Child 2 had evidently already established a “body of knowledge” with “the skills to connect and apply that knowledge in different contexts.” (Donaldson, 2015, p.29) It was very apparent that both children were engaged in the learning and enjoyed the collaborative nature of it. With reference to another of Donaldson’s proposed four purposes, that of “healthy, confident individuals who...form positive relationships based on trust and mutual respect,” (2015, p.30), it is telling that the classroom environment was such that a relationship existed between Child 1 and 2 which enabled one to give and one to receive information and assistance in a positive manner.

There are several key areas to be considered in the examination of this incident, both in terms of the environment in which it occurred and the learning that was demonstrated. Child 2 proffered a significant amount of prior knowledge for the benefit of Child 1. In doing this, Child 2 can be described as a live example of Vygotsky’s “more capable peer” (1978, p.86) also known as more knowledgeable other or MKO. Child 2’s in-depth knowledge combined with the motor skills and prior knowledge of Child 1 enabled an advanced outcome that Child 1 could not have achieved alone. The “zone of proximal development” as expounded by Vygotsky (1978, p.86) was therefore accessed by Child 1 via a combination of the initial reading of the researcher and the guidance and topic specific information of Child 2. In an echo of the example employed by Vygotsky both of the children observed were of the same biological or actual age, but in the specific context, Child 2 could be considered to be operating at a higher “mental age”(1978, p.85) and therefore enabling a peer to do the same. It is not possible to draw a conclusion regarding the general mental age of either participant from one specific observed incident but within these boundaries the behaviours witnessed would support this assessment. The inextricable tie between social interaction and human learning to which Vygotsky subscribed (1978), and the benefits to both parties could be deemed to be evident. It could be considered a potential disadvantage to rely too heavily on Vygotsky’s ‘Mind in Society’ as it was published in 1978, long after his death and some forty years after original publication. It is also a translation from the original Russian as well as being an edited collection of some of his work, limitations which the editors themselves refer to (1978, p.11 & ix). While these are important factors, along with Vygotsky’s historical and political context, the volume’s instigation by Vygotsky’s student Alexander Luria lends an endorsement to its authenticity. The fact that Vygotsky’s theories are still considered worthy of study today, forming part of many Initial Teacher Education programmes and are clearly living and breathing as per the critical incident, also underlines its value. In a present-day context, it is surely no coincidence that the wording of Successful

Futures “Pedagogical Principles” (2015, p.64 – 70) echoes ‘Mind in Society’ (1978, p.89) in referring to “good learning.” Vygotsky’s definition as being “in advance of development” (1978, p.89) would seem to compliment Donaldson’s vision of “challenges all learners,” (2015, p.64) with both authors appreciating the ability of learners to extend beyond the linear age-related boundaries and “schema” of knowledge hypothesised by Piaget (1953, p.7). This consensus would suggest that both Vygotsky and Donaldson’s work is based on sound educational principles.

The important contribution of collaboration is another common theme between the two, (Donaldson, 2015, p.71, Vygotsky, 1978, p.86), with Vygotsky’s more knowledgeable other (1978 p.86) being the visible representation of this. It is an approach also valued by Wood, Bruner and Ross in the “scaffolding” of learning process (1976, p.90). The “recruitment” stage of this process (1976, p.98) could be said to have been initiated by the researcher in Appendix A through interaction with the challenge cards, but it was the collaboration with Child 2 that provided the actual supporting structure.

The significance of peer interaction in learning, not only in the form of MKO, is widely recognised. Black and Wiliam (1998) note the benefits of peer involvement in formative assessment, and the subsequent recognition of Assessment for Learning (AFL) strategies as desirable best practice builds on the idea of the peer as a valuable source of feedback. The Welsh Assembly Government (2010) document offering guidance to teachers on the implementation of AFL principles also emphasises the value of discussion between peers and asserts “nearly 80% of what children learn, they learn from each other,” (p.6). If this statement is taken as factual it underlines the vital importance of the quality of these peer interactions as they have the potential to deliver so much in terms of learning enrichment. While the document mainly deals with peer feedback and collaboration in the context of AFL related strategies (one of which builds on the idea of MKO) (p.64), consideration is given to the importance of a positive environment in which these exchanges take place, a factor also alluded to by Black and Wiliam (1998, p.9 & p.13).

There is obvious potential for a negative aspect to peer assessment in that children may be inclined to be overly critical if the right environment of support and respect has not been established. The same may also be true in an interaction as in Appendix A, where the self esteem of Child 1 could be affected by the demonstration of greater knowledge in a peer. Even when the incident was considered from the point of view of both participants, the researcher observed that there was no evidence whatsoever to suggest that was the case. One of the benefits of a direct observation being used to gather information for this case study is that the observer was able to gain an impression of the “emotional well-being” and

“involvement” of Child 1 and 2 as defined by Laevers (1994, p.161) and considered against the “Leuven Involvement Scale for Young Children.” (Laevers, 1994, p.164) Both children demonstrated very high levels of “involvement” and “exploratory drive” (p.163), became completely focussed on the task and the “satisfaction” (p.162) they both felt during and on completion of the task was clearly visible. The exchange between Child 1 and Child 2 also suggests very high levels of well-being as they were both visibly happy and communicative with no signs of tension. Laevers references many times the importance of well-being in order to thrive in the classroom, and the same regard for the significance of health and well-being, both physical and mental is also a priority for Donaldson (2015, p. 45 & 46). This section of the proposed curriculum devoted to “Health and Well-Being” stresses the importance of a supportive culture within a school. This evidently existed at School X. Child 2 offered assistance, apparently motivated by nothing more than a passion for the topic and a vision of the end product, without any suggestion of arrogance in the position of greater knowledge. Equally, Child 1 welcomed the input without resentment or any sense of inferiority and revelled in accessing the “zone of proximal development.” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86)

It would, of course, be possible to conclude that Child 1 and Child 2 interacted so comfortably due to the presumed existing friendship between them. In considering this, it is valuable to reflect on the findings discussed by Light and Littleton (1999 p.24). The studies they refer to were conducted with groups or pairs that were deliberately chosen as opposed to the more spontaneous pairing that occurred in this critical incident, but it is interesting that the results of the various studies do not reach a definitive conclusion. The 1988 study found no difference in the performance of groups made up of friends or not, while the later found there to be some perceivable benefits of friends collaborating on certain tasks. The writers’ own investigation in 1987 found there to be very little difference in overall ability to complete the task collectively, however the point is made that groups that had elected to work together required less teacher input and made fewer errors. In the case of this critical incident it is not possible to be sure to what extent the relationship between Child 1 and Child 2 facilitated their collaboration as it would be impossible to fully understand the dynamics of this based on a single observation. However, there would appear to be some merit in Light and Littleton’s conclusion that the children who had chosen to collaborate may have experienced “effective mutual support, or perhaps lower anxiety,” (pp 24-25) and this would seem to be the case for this critical incident.

There is much consensus on the value of peer learning and collaboration, but also on the potential adverse effects of the same. Didau (2016, pp.348-351) discusses eloquently the hugely influential role of the peer in the school environment and how this “visceral” power

may be tamed to create a mutually supportive learning setting. He is, however, also realistic in his appraisal of the scale of the issues that may arise if this can not be achieved. This dichotomy is not a new concept, in 1969 Erikson also underlines the potential for “a sense of inadequacy and inferiority” when a child may compare themselves in a negative light with peers on entering school. (p.251) Ultimately, the common belief would appear to be that the wide-ranging benefits of social learning and collaboration with peers can be accessed most effectively within a supportive, respectful learning environment built on trust.

The concept of “relational trust” within a whole school environment is discussed in detail by Bryk and Schneider (2004). Their longitudinal study was undertaken with the intention of demonstrating the positive effect on outcomes of student learning where high relational trust could be developed in the school community. The study was conducted in a very specific geographical area in Chicago, and was in response to recognised community needs, but the concept bears scrutiny when applied to this critical incident despite its very different context. The hallmarks described by Bryk and Schneider such as respectful conversations between parties and a sense of contributing to the greater good were observed in Child 1 and Child 2.

Reflection on the critical incident (Appendix A) using the ARC model provided by Yr Athrofa (Appendix E) has proved to be very enlightening. It is very useful being able to follow a line of questioning in order to analyse and truly interpret what has been observed and to organise the thinking. During this process I initially discovered that I was frustrated with myself for having prompted the space challenge, as I felt that picking up the cards was the catalyst that created the subsequent action and I had therefore not observed something that had organic origins. However, when considering the incident further, and reflecting on Monahan and Fisher (2010), I began to realise that the incident was no less valuable in terms of the insights it provided, even if my presence had contributed initially to the interaction I subsequently observed. Brookfield (2017) describes the reflective lens of Students' Eyes as “the Rosetta stone needed to decode assumptions of power,” (p.66), a highly evocative metaphor which I felt was appropriate in this case. I am confident that neither Child 1 or Child 2 would view the interaction between them in terms of power dynamics in the classroom and their appraisal would simply be that they ‘made a rocket together.’ I also do not feel that Child 1 felt inferior in any way to Child 2 despite the difference in their knowledge, due to the positive way in which it was shared. However, when considering this through their eyes, it has highlighted for me the inherent power attached to literacy, and the importance of communicating learning intentions to children in more than one format. It is the nature of some of the Foundation Phase provision that children sometimes discover and learn without adult intervention, which is a positive concept. This incident, however, has ensured that I will take into consideration the additional skills required

to enable a child to participate fully in any ongoing provision planning in my future classroom. Child 1 was aided by an adult being available to read out a card in this instance, but for the future some pictorial prompts to accompany written material may help to bridge that gap in literacy for other children while their reading skills are still developing.

This critical incident also serves as a reminder that the nominal teacher is not the only person in the classroom fulfilling that role. Taking note of both the adage 'Knowledge is Power' and Brookfield's assertion that one of the key benefits of critical reflection is "to understand the power dynamics of their classroom," (2017, p19) it is clear that power in these terms could be widely distributed throughout the class. In future practice this is something I would now have a heightened awareness of and I would consider drawing out any areas of special interest by inviting any child with a particular enthusiasm to share this knowledge with their peers, possibly through an 'Ask the Expert' group session or a question and answer spot, providing the child would be comfortable doing that. The observation of Child 2 suggests that they would be confident in this type of activity and it is something to possibly consider in the setting observed to gauge the validity of this.

The third point of the observation that was brought into sharper focus by reflection was that the environment of the specific classroom was clearly such that the children could collaborate without there appearing to be any conflict or negative impact on self-esteem. It is possible to make many assumptions regarding why that was the case, but on examining the physical classroom there were displays relating to children's rights which leads me to the conclusion that some previous learning has taken place regarding positive behaviour and this has contributed to a positive classroom culture. This is something I would consider important in establishing in my own practice.

Both Tripp (2012) and Brookfield (2017) emphasise the crucial contribution honest and critical reflection of the teaching and learning in any teacher's classroom makes to the understanding of practice, the children's learning and any future improvement or development. The use of Brookfield's "four lenses" (p.7) to aid this process is something I intend to adopt as I begin my teaching journey in order to benefit the children I will teach and enable me to develop into an effective and evolving teacher.

In conclusion, theory and practice collided in this incident, which unfolded spontaneously. Child 2 did not arrive armed with the idea of being Vygotsky's "more capable peer" (1978, p.86) and Child 1 was not aware of being "scaffolded" (Bruner, 1976 p.90) It is only through observation and reflection it is possible to detect these as such and appreciate the learning that has occurred with a view to informing future practice. This confirms Tripp's assessment quoted at the outset of this study of the potential criticality of the apparently trivial. As already

mentioned, the curriculum in Wales, and as a result the skills required for teachers is undergoing significant review and change. The new Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership (Welsh Government, 2018b) underline explicitly the role of reflection in the professional development of the teacher and in innovative approaches to teaching. This is a time of huge change for teachers in Wales but also one that is full of possibility for creativity and development. The ability to reflect critically on practice and be willing to make changes, to provide the best possible learning for students and to maximise the opportunities presented by the new curriculum will become essential to secure “Successful Futures” (Donaldson, 2015) for all.

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Yr Athrofa (2019) *Assisted Reflective Conclusions (ARC) Model*



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OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

APPENDIX A

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date: 26 th September 2019
Lesson details: Enhanced Provision area with wooden blocks and challenge cards with ideas for construction – a new addition to the area
Classroom culture (Are the students focused on learning?) 4 children in the area, complying with classroom limits per area. 3 children using the blocks to “brick each other up” into the corner, 1 child (hereafter Child 1) engrossed in building single level house with detailed rooms. Interesting feature “Pizza oven” described to self.
Objectives (Is there a clear purpose to the lesson? How do the lesson activities promote that purpose?) Challenge cards have been provided in this area with tasks relating to the class theme of ‘Harvest’ such as “build a home for farm animals for the winter” – one unusual card “build a vehicle to travel into space” – not theme related.
Direction (Are the students clear about what they are doing and how to do it well?) Challenge cards are available and give prompt for ideas and to capture evidence e.g “draw a picture of what you built” but this is very much an undirected task in terms of “how.” Allows for imaginative interpretation.
Access and challenge (Are all students able to engage in the lesson? Are all students challenged?) Child 1 was aware of challenge cards but due to limited literacy had not been able to read them alone and had therefore ignored them. Showed an interest when I picked them up and asked for them to be read. Was then able to engage in the challenge. However, Child 1 was also happy building the house. Other 3 children in the area focussed very much on the play aspect – main purpose enjoying blocking each other in. Is this because the blocks are not considered challenging or is the challenge idea TOO challenging, therefore rejected and own play takes over?
Assessment How does the teacher assess student understanding before, during and after the lesson? How is this used in their teaching? Not observed, no adult interaction in this area other than my own. Child-led. Assessment described on cards as above “draw” etc.
Specifics / Critical Incidents Are there particular telling moments and examples which it would be helpful to discuss? When I read out space card and asked what type of vehicle, Child 1 identified rocket, when asked how it would travel – less sure. At this point Child 2 arrived from another area “a rocket? You need a booster to get into space.” Child 2 described rocket and launch process with detailed knowledge and lots of enthusiasm. Didn’t impose on Child 1 just offered information which was accepted with great interest and lots of questions. They then started to select appropriate pieces together but Child 2 sat back and mainly let Child 1 build but with more facts being shared during the process. Child 2 seemed unconscious of being an expert and was just spontaneous in joining an activity that tuned into a passion. Child 1 gladly interacted and sought advice on selection and construction. Child 1 suggested they complete the last part together and both were

APPENDIX A CONTINUED



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delighted with the result. Child 1 then tried to engage another child in the area to repeat the task.
Vast amount of knowledge on space possessed by Child 2, positive relationship between the two promoted sharing of this.



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OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

APPENDIX B

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date: 26 th September 2019
Lesson details: Focus group task – identifying 2D shapes on a spinner and plotting onto a block chart
Classroom culture (Are the students focused on learning?) 4 children with class teacher, spinning and colouring independently with regular review and encouragement from teacher. All 4 seem engaged and are enjoying themselves. Sufficiently engrossed to not be chatting to each other while they work. Motor skills is a focus area for the whole class and these children are coping well with the spinner.
Objectives (Is there a clear purpose to the lesson? How do the lesson activities promote that purpose?) Building on last week's lesson identifying the properties of the shapes, this task brings that knowledge together with the modelling of building a block chart that was the starter.
Direction (Are the students clear about what they are doing and how to do it well?) Yes, 7 spins each and then count to see what they spun the most of. Teacher is also asking them to describe the shapes as they go and asking "how do you know it's a square..etc" Each child so far has been accurate in their counting and presenting their results.
Access and challenge (Are all students able to engage in the lesson? Are all students challenged?) Some have found this easier than others, but well within the capabilities of most.
Assessment How does the teacher assess student understanding before, during and after the lesson? How is this used in their teaching? Revisit of last week's learning in starter and transfer of this to block chart through cards given out and plotting on interactive white board. Regular check ins and constant supervision during task. Discussion afterwards to interpret results.
Specifics / Critical Incidents Are there particular telling moments and examples which it would be helpful to discuss? One child (Child 3) on leaving the table said to the teacher after counting the blocks on the page "I wish we still did maths." Teacher: "This is maths, looking at the shapes and their sides and corners and counting them onto the chart is maths." Child 3: "No, I mean proper maths with proper numbers and proper counting." I'm intrigued by this idea.



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OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

APPENDIX C

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date: 2 nd October 2019
Lesson details: Whole Class session on carpet area, watching a video for phonics scheme, repeating and reinforcing sounds.
Classroom culture (Are the students focused on learning?) Majority of students appear to be giving their full attention to the screen and responding as required, one appears completely disengaged and is looking at the ceiling, another is persistently fussing with a child sitting in front of them.
Objectives (Is there a clear purpose to the lesson? How do the lesson activities promote that purpose?) This is a regular part of the weekly routine and I had been told earlier about "Geraldine the Giraffe who helps us learn our letters" by the children. They understand the purpose on an ongoing basis, after the first short video is complete the children are asked to vote for their favourite letter video to watch and they are enthusiastic about choosing.
Direction (Are the students clear about what they are doing and how to do it well?) All understand the concept, and success is singing along and reinforcing the sounds in a group which - on the whole - they are doing.
Access and challenge (Are all students able to engage in the lesson? Are all students challenged?) Accessible for all and this is a familiar activity, varying degrees of literacy so this is more challenging for some than others.
Assessment How does the teacher assess student understanding before, during and after the lesson? How is this used in their teaching? Observation of participation during the video.
Specifics / Critical Incidents Are there particular telling moments and examples which it would be helpful to discuss? Fussing child (Child 4) singled out by name once and asked to stop. Child 4 persisted, video paused and child called to the front. Child 4 had been appointed as helper of the day which is treasured, when at the front "I've already asked you, what does this mean now?" "I'm not helper now." Sticker removed from child and given to next on list who then sits in 'special seat.' Child 4 clearly knew that this was the pre-agreed sanction but was absolutely devastated and dissolved into quiet tears while sitting on carpet.



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OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

APPENDIX D

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date: 2 nd October 2019
Lesson details: Carpet time review of previous work undertaken on theme of Harvest with intention of reminding those still to complete the task what they were meant to do. Modelling "what a good one looks like" and pupils have started assessing their own work with the school's emoji sticker system to say whether they were able to complete independently, this was also being reviewed.
Classroom culture (Are the students focused on learning?) Some are engaged, hoping their work will be shown, half of the group were enthusiastic in verbally recalling their trip to the local chapel earlier in the session but now appear less keen when relating this to the written task. Why is this?
Objectives (Is there a clear purpose to the lesson? How do the lesson activities promote that purpose?) Purpose is review and prompt for continuing work and to check understanding of use of stickers. Activity is mainly teacher communication.
Direction (Are the students clear about what they are doing and how to do it well?) What a good one looks like is clearly modelled, and the children yet to complete have a good prompt to work to. Praise being given for effort – outcome is differentiated.
Access and challenge (Are all students able to engage in the lesson? Are all students challenged?) Not really applicable to this observation
Assessment How does the teacher assess student understanding before, during and after the lesson? How is this used in their teaching? This session is really all about this. Lots of questioning to check understanding of prior task and the rating system.
Specifics / Critical Incidents Are there particular telling moments and examples which it would be helpful to discuss? Review of emoji shows that the children are selecting the "sunglasses" which means I completed everything alone and helped a friend, but this isn't what is happening. They are simply choosing their favourite sticker not attaching any meaning. Teacher aware that one child who had graded their work appropriately with "I needed help" had removed the sticker as they were embarrassed. This system is apparently working well in KS2 but level of understanding and familiarity with self-assessment is greater. The teacher wants to discuss with Head to see if this can be adapted for Year 1 setting.

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

Dyddiad/Date: 26th September 2019

APPENDIX E – REFLECTION ON APPENDIX A

Digwyddiad critigol (Ffocws)/Critical incident (focus): Peer interaction in enhanced provision

Profiad/ Experience	
Teimladau/ Feelings Beth yw eich teimladau ynghylch y profiad? "What are your feelings regarding the experience?"	The collaboration between Child 1 and Child 2 was spontaneous and was such a positive example of the value of peer learning. For Child 2 to give and Child 1 to accept input and advice that suggests a supportive, trusting learning environment. Genuinely delighted by the enthusiasm of Child 2 for their topic and the depth of knowledge, something to build on. Child 1 was initially affected by being unable to read the challenge, which other activities are being influenced by literacy levels?
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 dysgu oedd yn siomedig? "What were the elements of the learning experience that were disappointing?"	The combined team created a great end product and Child 2 imparted quite a bit of knowledge which Child 1 was interested in – asking many questions. I observed no indications of either child judging each other in terms of their level of knowledge or skill. Child 1 was keen to pass on the knowledge gained and tried to engage another peer to repeat the task. I would have preferred to have been completely non-participant as I wonder if any of the observed action would have occurred had I not picked up the cards. Child 2 clearly has a deep interest in this topic and a lot of knowledge. This didn't appear to have come to light before. Would like to observe further to see if this is typical for Child 2 or if limited to this specific topic.
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?"	Keep the challenge cards with the blocks as the imaginative possibilities are significant. Encourage the children to consider working together on challenges where appropriate to extend the experience learning can draw on. Level of literacy did not permit Child 1 to engage with the challenge cards alone
Casgliadau a chamau gweithredu/ Conclusions and actions Beth yw eich atebion posibl i'r materiau 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?"	Provide some pictorial prompts alongside the written challenges to aid with understanding where literacy is a barrier Child 2 as MKO could be one of many. Consider asking Child 2 to "present" even if informally to share knowledge with possible Q&A. Consider an "Ask the Expert" every few weeks where a pre-arranged child shares their knowledge/interest on a particular topic. Child as teacher. Review other enhanced/continuous provision activities to gauge if literacy could affect engagement
Y profiad newydd / Transformed experience	

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

Dyddiad/Date: 26th September 2019

APPENDIX F REFLECTION ON APPENDIX B

Digwyddiad critigol (Ffocws)/Critical incident (focus): 2D Shapes – child's perception of Maths

Profiad/ Experience	
Teimladau/ Feelings Beth yw eich teimladau ynghylch y profiad? "What are your feelings regarding the experience?"	Surprise that Child 3 thinks in these terms at 5 years old. Child 3's mother is a Primary teacher – is this something that has come from home? If so, that is a concern. Is it unusual for children this young to only think of maths in terms of counting? The word "proper" implies almost a negative judgement of the other areas of maths by comparison. Do we need to give labels to content being covered? Should it matter what area of learning is being addressed as far as the learner is concerned?
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 dysgu oedd yn siomedig? "What were the elements of the learning experience that were disappointing?"	Engaging activity that all children seemed to enjoy and the learning seems secure as all children could explain how they knew which shape was which, and could complete the block chart with very little assistance. Lesson was well structured with clear link to previous learning and the starter session. Good mix of ICT activity, shape knowledge, graph skills and fine motor skills. The throwaway comment by Child 3 to the teacher. It raised the questions for me as per the section above.
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?"	Were I to deliver this lesson, I would follow the activity as observed. There was a clear structure and good mix of media used. Learning objective was achievable for all and ensured prior learning had been retained. The comment by Child 3 as it suggests critical opinion but without sound knowledge behind it – i.e shape is a well recognised area of Maths. If thinking is developed enough to speak in the terms used, it seems anomalous that the information being drawn on is incorrect. It appeared to be more of a "quoted" response by an adult.
Casgliadau a chymau gweithredu/ Conclusions and actions Beth yw eich atebion posibl i'r materiau 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?"	Consider ways in which to ascertain why Child 3 apparently holds this opinion without confrontation. Keep this in mind as the new curriculum is implemented, where there will be less identification of "subjects" and a broader approach across an area of learning. Is this perception something that may recur elsewhere – discuss with more experienced colleagues. Be aware of labels I might attach to particular parts of learning and promote the importance of a whole field not just one aspect.
Y profiad newydd / Transformed experience	

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

Dyddiad/Date: 2nd October 2019

Appendix G Reflection on Appendix C

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

Profiad/ Experience	
Teimladau/ Feelings Beth yw eich teimladau ynghylch y profiad? "What are your feelings regarding the experience?"	This was an uncomfortable situation to observe in simple terms as it resulted in an upset child. However, it was clear that Child 4 'knew what was coming' and that agreed levels of behavior have clearly been set and are generally observed. It was immediately effective in that Child 4 stopped fussing and the incident served as a warning to the rest of the class, but it would be interesting to see if there is a long-term benefit or whether negative reinforcement would come into play. What would the sanction have been if Child 4 had not had the Helper title to remove?
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 dysgu oedd yn siomedig? "What were the elements of the learning experience that were disappointing?"	The majority of the class were engaged by the phonics video and were participating well. Child 5 who has ASD was very animated upon recognising letters that appeared in their name and joined in with peers more than earlier in the day. Literacy is an area for development in the class but some children seemed to have a good grasp of some key sounds. The sanction of Child 4 changed the atmosphere of the remaining session (approx. 5 mins), observation had taken place several times of the esteem in which gaining a sticker for good work/behaviour or a responsibility for the day is held. This was emphasised by the opposite effect when this is removed.
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 scheme of phonics video struck a chord with the pupils and would be something of value to revisit. This session coincided with snack time and aided concentration and calm down as it required focus. Child 4 was clearly not as engaged as some peers to have been fussing in the first place, why is this? Is the learning too challenging, as there is quite a variance in literacy levels within the class or is the video scheme so familiar and Child 4 so confident in the learning that less attention was given? Further observation suggests the former. The sanction given would not have been an available option on another day, would the alternative have been something that had less of an effect?
Casgliadau a chamau Conclusions and actions Beth yw eich atebion posibl i'r materiau 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?"	Possible review of another phonics programme to consider if this would be more accessible for lower literacy levels and promote engagement. Consider the implications of pre-agreed sanctions in terms of child self-esteem and possible negative reinforcement.

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

Dyddiad/Date: 2nd October 2019

APPENDIX H REFLECTION ON APPENDIX D

Digwyddiad critigol (Ffocws)/Critical incident (focus): Self Assessment System

Profiad/ Experience	
Teimladau/ Feelings Beth yw eich teimladau ynghylch y profiad? "What are your feelings regarding the experience?"	Reflecting on this through both the pupil's and the teacher's eyes it is understandable that the children would select based on attractiveness, but the teacher is trying to support an initiative being supported by the Head. Self-assessment is an important tool but is a skill that takes time to develop. This may not be the optimum format for this age at their stage of development in that skill.
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 dysgu oedd yn siomedig? "What were the elements of the learning experience that were disappointing?"	The children are clearly excited by the idea of stickers and have some concept of applying these in appraisal of their work. Good work was shared and praise given. The teacher recognises that the intended system is problematic for this group of children. The assessment scheme that is working well in KS2 doesn't seem to be having the desired effect in Year 1. If a child is embarrassed by accurately assessing their work and having a sticker in the book to mark this, some tweaking is needed.
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?"	Sharing good exemplars, revisiting key details to prompt further activity and genuine praise all created a positive environment and attitude. The children either do not have a secure grasp of why their self-assessment needs to be accurate even if this means a sticker they don't like, or it is simply an attraction to the "Cool" emoji. Both the teacher and I felt it was generally more the latter.
Casgliadau a chymau gweithredu/ Conclusions and actions Beth yw eich atebion posibl i'r materiau siomedig a nodwyd? "What are your possible solutions to the disappointing issues identified?" Beth ydych yn mynd i'w gwneud nesaf? "What will you do next?"	It would be possible to tweak this system for the younger pupils ensuring that all available options are eye-catching so that there would be less focus on having the most attractive/popular and more emphasis on applying an objective assessment. It may also be worth considering a session discussing self-assessment, the benefits and use of etc to help grow this skill. Stress the important message "It is OK if you had help it is just a picture of how this task went," to try and combat any stigma attached to this.
Y profiad newydd / Transformed experience	