

I have not used AI in this assignment.

Contents page:

1. Part 2
2. Reference List

Part 2

Reflection paper

Introduction

What does quality mean in Wales early years according to Early Years Wales (2020) a dedication to high standards in childcare and early childhood play, learning, and care defines quality in early years in Wales. This includes following the curriculum for Wales and the national minimum standards for regulated childcare in Wales. A happy, healthy, safe, and inclusive environment for children is important, according to the Welsh Government's aim. Practitioners are guided in providing high-quality services by quality frameworks and tools like the early childhood play, learning, and care plan and the quality for all plans. These frameworks, which assist the holistic development of children ages 0 to 5, are created through co-construction by practitioners.

Wales is working to establish an excellent, rights-based strategy for early childhood play, learning, and care according to Gov.Wales (2022) both childhood and our future are greatly influenced by the early years. The Welsh Government has made the decision to put children's development needs and well-being at the centre of early childhood play, learning, and care in Wales to guarantee that every child between the ages of 0 and 5 has the best start in life. Through co-construction by practitioners, for practitioners, this quality framework was created. It is presented from the practitioner's perspective, utilizing knowledge from the nursery education, play work, and 0–5 daycare sectors. However, Gov.Wales (2022) suggests that the numerous requirements for providing the type of high-quality provision required in Wales are compiled in the early childhood play, learning and care quality framework for Wales. This framework should be used by leaders and practitioners in the childcare, play work, and nursery education sectors to direct provision, parents and caregivers can use it to better understand the services offered to their children, and local authorities can use it to support the creation and enhancement of services.

In the early years, quality goes beyond simply fulfilling requirements it also involves offering experiences that are sensitive to children's changing interests and needs. This requires a connection built on respect and understanding amongst all parties involved, especially the parents according to Bland (2024) we are aware that a child's formative years are the most important as their brains are expanding and creating billions of new connections at this time.

An excellent early childhood education is essential Ofsted (2024) claims at an important stage in their development, children attend early years programs. Future health and happiness as well as future academic success are influenced by the care and education they get.

Benefits of using additional methods and tools to improve and expand quality assurance such as early years Wales, according to Early Years Wales (2020) providing high-quality childcare where children and families have the best experiences and opportunities possible requires continuously reflecting on and evaluating practice, as well as consistently meeting all regulatory requirements to the highest standards.

According to Brock (2015) one or more perspectives on quality are likely to inform and influence the way early years practitioners think about the quality of the services they provide. When you consider quality, you may describe it as a good or excellent ofsted rating and the successful execution of the early year's foundation stage, or parental satisfaction with their child's upbringing and education, or children joy and contentment with their experiences and development, or maybe you take all of them into account. Encourages professional communication and staff growth according to Early Years Wales (2020) constructive feedback, direction, and referrals to support services are provided during the expert conversation with an assessor. Employee competence, confidence, and a common sense of quality could all improve as an outcome. However, Early Years Wales (2020) also shows boosts credibility with parents, funders, and CIW accreditation indicates a dedication to quality, which may strengthen family trust and promote sustainability critical in Wales's mixed economy childcare environment.

The disadvantages and challenges, time consuming for small groups according to Early Years Wales (2020) It can be difficult to complete reflective documentation, get ready for evaluation, and collect evidence especially for small voluntary managed settings or those in underprivileged areas. Even if the revised of is quicker, it still requires structured paperwork and preparation, which could be overwhelming during demanding times. Pressures on sustainability and costs, purchase or subscription fees are frequently a part of quality assurance programs. Participation or reaccreditation may be hampered in settings that already have limited funding.

However, Early Years Wales (2020) suggest not always suitable for a variety of environments, generic frameworks may not adequately capture the particular context or difficulties of rural, bilingual, or specialty additional learning needs focused contexts.

Gathering high-quality, reliable, and useful data in a number of important fields is essential to improving early years services in Wales according to Welsh Government (2024) development of children and wellbeing data in order to make sure that provision supports children's holistic needs, settings require information on, the advancement of cognitive, social, emotional, physical, and linguistic areas. Early detection of additional learning needs or new requirements. Provision quality to enhance quality Policyforumforwales.co.uk (2020) suggest that local authorities and settings must have Inspection results combined CIW and Estyn inspections results of self-evaluation and practice quality observations, play, interactions, environment.

Evidence of curriculum implementation play-based, child-centred approaches and audits of accessibility and inclusion.

According to Welsh Government (2022) Information on access and equity to improve access, one must comprehend the need for early education and childcare in the area, accessibility obstacles, cost, language, transportation, and SEND support and the use of sponsored nursery spaces, flying start, and childcare offer.

Workforce Information a key component of the early childhood play, learning and development plan is a robust workforce. According to Gov.Wales (2026) Important details consist of Information on recruitment and retention, training requirements and workforce qualifications, Welsh language knowledge and development pathways, workload and employee well-being, turnover, staffing trends, and ratios, and availability of professional education.

Welsh Government (2024) suggest that community needs and family involvement, in order to improve collaboration, settings must feedback and pleasure from parents and caregivers, information about the home learning environment, local support systems and community priorities and the efficacy of family engagement programs and officers.

The preferred method tells us, but only if the appropriate data is gathered and properly reviewed. According to the Welsh early years improvement method Exchangewales.org (2023) claims whether children are developing as they should, It provides information about the formation of language, emotional and social health, physical growth, new additional learning needs requirements and play involvement This is necessary since Wales system is child-centred, and children's needs must come first. Whether the service is of the highest standard the technique reveals, the quality of exchanges, the learning environment's effectiveness, the degree to which play has been planned and encouraged, the setting's level of inclusiveness and the degree to which the curriculum is implemented. This is in line with the new early childhood education and care quality framework, which encourages high standards and consistency.

According to Gov.Wales. (n.d.) they don't explain how to measure their impact on children's results. The early childhood play, learning and care framework outlines play, child-centred practice, and developmental pathways, however, it does not offer measurable indications of advancement over time, how provisions affect long-term results, how to assess if children truly gain from practice adjustments, and the framework is purposefully descriptive rather than evaluative. They don't explain how to resolve inconsistencies throughout Wales according to Stewart and Macdonald (n.d.) research reveals that provision varies despite robust policy, the experiences provided by various local administrations vary, the curriculum is delivered inconsistently to children aged three to four, and rights-based practices differ greatly. limitations or workload quality frameworks make the following assumptions according to Early Years Wales (2020) sufficient staff, a moment to contemplate, the ability to

plan, training access, but they don't deal with, obstacles in hiring, problems with storage, employee well-being and pressures from the workload, compensation and terms. These are significant obstacles to putting quality into practice.

Although early years quality methods in Wales such as the early childhood play, learning and care framework Welsh Government (2024) claims curriculum for Wales early years guidance. Welsh Government (2022) suggest CIW/Estyn inspection frameworks provide a strong principled foundation for child-centred, play-based, and inclusive practice, they contain notable limitations that restrict their effectiveness in driving measurable improvement. The early childhood play, learning and care framework emphasises reflective questions and professional judgement but offers no clear indicators of impact, leaving settings without a consistent way to evaluate children's progress or the effectiveness of provision. This gap is reflected in wider research, which highlights significant inconsistency and fragmentation in early years practice across Wales despite robust policy intentions. Similarly, while national guidance outlines expectations for inclusion and workforce roles, it fails to address structural challenges such as recruitment, retention, workload, and staff wellbeing according to Welsh Government (2023) all of which directly affect the feasibility of high-quality practice. The frameworks also provide limited practical guidance for supporting children with complex additional learning needs, despite the rights-based commitments of the additional learning needs act, and offer no operational solutions for multi-agency integration or access barriers identified in the early years integration transformation programme claims Welsh Government (2024) as a result, Welsh early years quality methods articulate what high-quality provision should look like but do not fully explain how to achieve it in practice, particularly in diverse or resource-constrained settings.

One of the most effective methods for promoting quality improvement in childcare settings is early years Wales quality for all In order for it to function according to Early Years Wales (2020) settings must finish the reflection of service, have expert conversations with a qualified assessor, take part in a practice observation, finish the yearly renewal, enhance in the following areas, hiring, interacting with, managing, and developing staff and the health and welfare of children, comprehensive play, education, and growth.

Learning Journals (2021) suggest benefits of the leuven, observation-based approach It emphasises the child's educational experience, guaranteeing that the method is flexible and responsive to the child's requirements. Main (2021) suggest early needs identification, using the scale on a regular basis enables teachers to identify children who might be having emotional or academic difficulties, enabling early support and intervention.

The leuven scale has many disadvantages despite being an effective tool for evaluating children's development. Subjectivity because the scale is based on observation and may be subjective Jackson (2025) claims it is challenging to generalise findings to different children. According to Learning Journals (2021) time

restrictions, with the demands of the national curriculum and assessment obligations, it can be difficult to observe each child every day.

Improving the leuven adapting to Individual needs, Jackson (2025) suggests modifying the framework to address the specific requirements for different children and environments, especially those with special educational needs and disabilities. Exchangewales.org (2023) claims co-construction of the quality framework, including practitioners in the framework's creation to guarantee that it considers their needs and areas of expertise.

Gathering accurate data that shows children's engagement and well-being is important for improving the standard of early years education in Wales according to Arnerich (2021) children who may be experiencing emotional difficulties or losing interest in activities can be identified using the leuven scales, which offer a structured framework for evaluating these symptoms. Teachers can learn more about the effectiveness of their practice and make well-informed judgments about how to enhance the learning environment by routinely monitoring and rating children's engagement and well-being. By taking a proactive approach, teachers can make prompt interventions that promote a more responsive and inclusive learning environment for every child.

Leuven's approach to promoting quality in early childhood education places a high value on the well-being and engagement of children according to Gov.Wales (n.d.) the leuven scales are important assessments for evaluating how children participate in activities and feel comfortable. A child's emotional health and engagement with their surroundings are reflected in high levels of well-being and involvement, which are essential for successful learning and development. This method motivates educators to establish secure and encouraging learning spaces that promote children' overall growth.

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