

The Professional Practitioner (ECEY4014/C)

Context page

- A reflective personal development plan
- Academic poster
- Written Essay

Part 1**Reflective personal development plan**

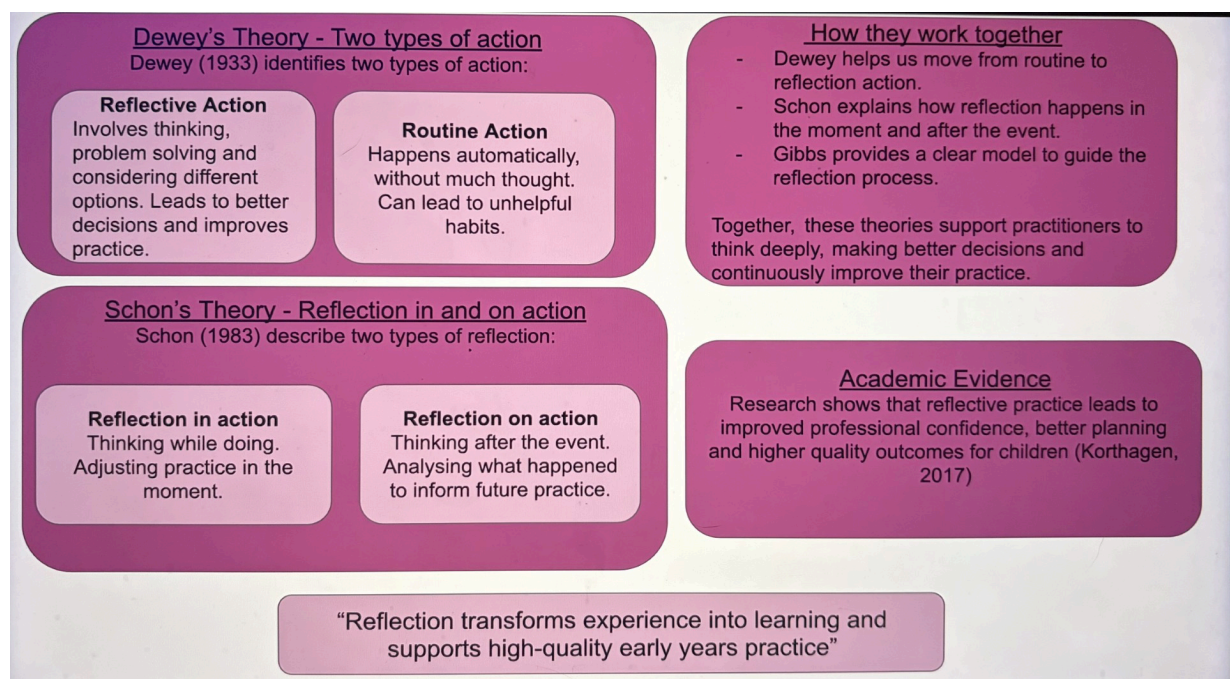
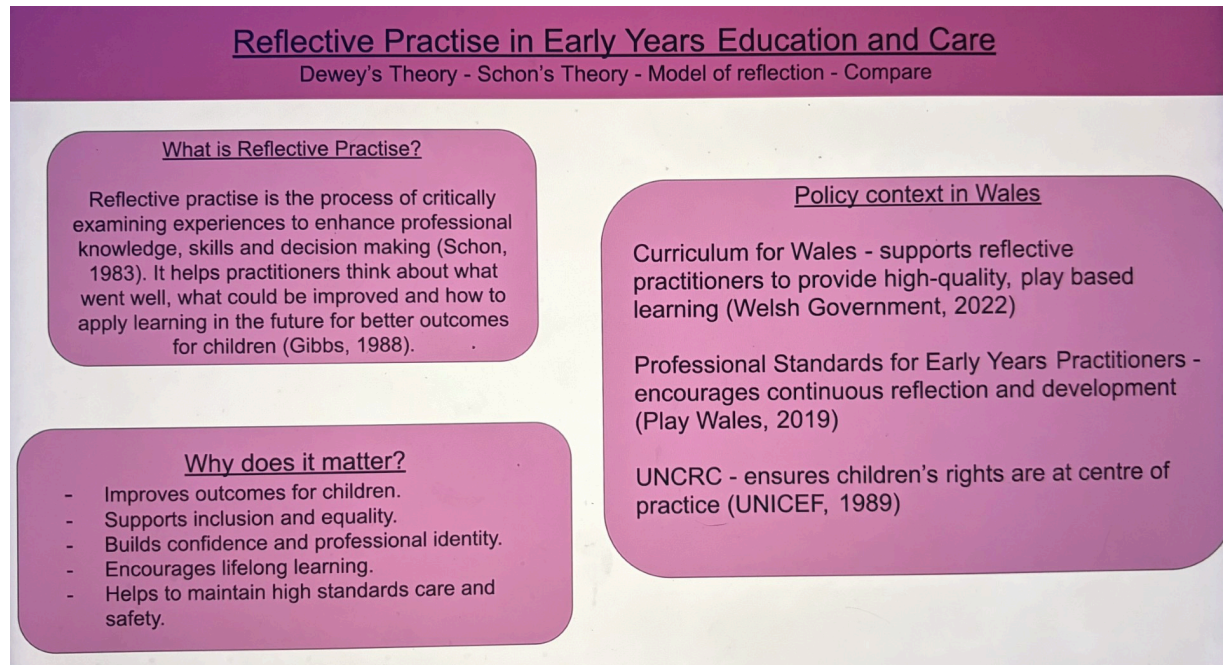
	<u>Improvement and Development goals</u>	<u>Success Criteria (How i will know when i have made this change)</u>	<u>The actions i will take to achieve the goal</u>	<u>Timelines</u>	<u>What will this help me to achieve</u>	<u>Achievements (3 monthly review)</u>
1	Improve my time management skills to balance work, university and personal life.	I can manage my time effectively by balancing my full-time work, university and personal commitments. I am able to meet deadlines, attend planned activities (gym and socialising with friends and family). Also feel less stressed and more organized.	Create a weekly timetable when I get my shifts for the week. Use a diary to document important information. Use the pomodoro technique to help with my time management.	Begin immediately and review the progress after every three months.	This goal will help me balance my responsibilities, reduce stress and meet deadlines.	I have started using a weekly timetable and plan my study sessions and personal interests. I have improved my organisation and become more confident in my workload.
2	Developing confidence in myself and my work.	I feel more confident in myself, my abilities and the quality of my work. I can recognise my strengths and trust my own judgement. Also, accept constructive feedback as an opportunity to learn and improve.	Ask for feedback on lectures to identify areas for improvement. Remind myself of my strengths and the skills i have developed through my childcare experiences.	This development goal is ongoing with progress.	This goal will help me develop greater self-belief. Improve my personal and professional development when completing tasks whilst gaining confidence.	I have started recognising my strengths and achievements. Become more aware of my abilities. I feel more confident in my work and becoming more comfortable trusting my

						own judgement.
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3	Develop my leadership skills as a Room Leader within my setting.	I feel more confident in completing my role as a room leader. I can effectively support and guide my team. Communicating professionally with colleagues and parents to ensure the children receive high quality care and learning experiences.	Develop my leadership and leadership skills by supporting and guiding my colleagues. Build positive working relationships with staff, parents and other professionals. Improve my confidence when making decisions and managing challenges within the setting. Continue learning about current early years practice to ensure the provision meets the children's individual needs.	On-going through my leadership position. My progress is then reviewed every few months.	This will help me become more effective and confident as a room leader by developing my knowledge and independence within the role. Also, it will improve my teamwork skills by making judgements and decisions.	I have started identifying my strengths as a room leader and areas where I would like to develop my skills. I have become more confident in supporting colleagues delegating responsibilities within my job role. I have strengthened my leadership skills and feel more confident managing my team and supporting high quality practice.
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Part 2

Academic Poster - Reflective practice in Early Years Education and Care



Compare: Dewey, Schon and Gibbs

Aspect	Dewey	Schon	Gibbs
Focus	Types of action (routine vs reflective)	Reflection in and on action	Structured cycle for reflection
Key ideas	Think before acting and reflect after	Think while doing and afterwards	Step by step process to analyse and learn
Use in EYEC practice	Encourages more thoughtful, reflective decisions	Helps manage situations in the moment and later	Provide a clear framework for ongoing professional development
Strength	Simple and practical	Real time application	Detailed and structured

References

- . Dewey, J (1933). However we think. Dover Publications.
- . Schon, D. (1983). The Reflectionier Practitioner. Basic Books.
- . Gibbs, G (1988). Learning by doing: A guide to teach and learning methods. Further education unit.
- . Korthagen, F (2017). Inconvenient truths about teacher learning: Towards more comprehensive understanding of teacher learning. Teaching and teacher education. 69, 144-153.
- . Welsh Government (2022). Curriculum for Wales: Framework for learning and teaching.

Part 3

Written essay - Recognise and analyse the significance of different aspects of professional practise and why these are important in meeting the individual and inclusive needs of children (1500 word).

Introduction

Professional practice in early years childcare involves the knowledge, skills and responsibilities required to support children's learning, development and well-being. Early years practitioners have an important role in creating a safe, inclusive environment where all children feel valued and supported. In my understanding, being a professional is not just about caring for children but also about understanding their individual needs. Communicating effectively with families and ensuring that every child has equal opportunities to develop. Practitioners must understand child development, safe guarding, children's rights and the importance of building positive relationships. The Welsh Government's Curriculum for Wales: Frame guide (2022) highlights the importance of supporting children's development through meaningful learning experiences. This links to professional practice because practitioners need to consider children's interests, abilities and experiences when planning activities. Therefore, effective professionals practice is essential

to ensuring that children receive appropriate care and that their individual needs are recognised and supported.

Communication and relationships

Communication and positive relationships are important aspects of professional practice because they help practitioners understand children's individual needs and develop trusting relationships with children and families. In my understanding, children are more likely to feel safe and confident when they have positive relationships with familiar adults. Practitioners can develop these relationships by listening to children, responding to their emotions and encouraging them to express their feelings.

For example, in a childcare setting, a child may become upset when their parent leaves in the morning. A practitioner can support the child by offering reassurance, speaking calmly and providing a familiar activity which interests them. This can help the child feel more comfortable and gradually become involved in play. This demonstrates how effective communication can support children's emotional well-being. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989) particularly Article 3. It states that a child's best interests must be a primary consideration. This links to the example because practitioners should consider the child's emotional needs and provide the appropriate support to help them feel safe and secure. Furthermore, article 12 highlights the importance of listening to children's views and feelings (United Nations, 1989) therefore practitioners should recognise children's emotions and respond sensitively to ensure they feel valued and supported.

Communication with parents is equally important because parents have valuable knowledge about their children's routines, interests and experiences. Sharing information can help practitioners provide consistent care and recognise changes in a child's behaviour or development. However, practitioners must communicate professionally and respect confidentiality when discussing sensitive information.

Therefore, effective communication and positive relationships help practitioners provide individualised care, build trust and create an environment where children feel secure. Without these relationships, children's needs may be overlooked, which could affect their confidence, participation and development.

Knowledge and safeguarding

Safeguarding is one of the most important responsibilities in early years childcare because practitioners have a duty to protect children from harm and promote their welfare. In my understanding, safeguarding involves recognising possible concerns, following the correct procedures and ensuring that information is shared with the appropriate people when necessary. As a Room Leader, it is important to understand the safeguarding policy within my setting and ensure that concerns are reported appropriately.

For example, if a practitioner notices an unexplained injury or a significant change in a child's behaviour, they should record factual information and report their concerns according to the setting's safeguarding procedures. Practitioners should not make assumptions or investigate concerns independently. This is important because failing to report concerns could place a child at further risk.

The Children Act 1989 provides a legal framework relating to children's welfare and protection. Section 1 establishes the welfare principle for decisions made by courts concerning a child's upbringing (Children Act 1989, s.1). The UNCRC also highlights the importance of protecting children's rights and considering their best interests (United Nations, 1989).

Understanding safeguarding procedures helps practitioners recognise their responsibilities and respond appropriately when concerns arise. Therefore, safeguarding knowledge, professional communication and accurate record-keeping are essential for maintaining a safe environment where children are protected and supported.

Partnership and muliti-agency

Partnership working is important in early years childcare because practitioners, parents and other professionals can work together to support children's individual needs. As a room leader, I understand that parents have valuable knowledge about their children including their routine, interests, abilities and experiences. Sharing information appropriately can help practitioners provide consistent care and identify when additional support may be needed.

For example, if a child is experiencing difficulties with speech and language. Practitioners could work with the child's parents and relevant professionals to identify suitable strategies to support and develop the child's communication. This could be supported by showing visual cards that include every day steps and objects to get the child familiar with structure.

However, partnership working requires respect, clear communication and appropriate confidentiality. Practitioners must understand when information needs to be shared to protect a child and follow the setting's safeguarding procedures, Safeguarding Policy & Procedure Abbey Childcare (2022).

In my understanding, effective partnership working is important because children's needs cannot always be met by one person/team. By working together, practitioners and families can develop a better understanding of each child and provide support that promotes their learning, development and well-being.

Observation and planning

Observation and planning are important aspects of professional practice because they help practitioners recognise children's interests, abilities and developmental needs. To my knowledge, observing children during their day and play allows practitioners to identify what they can already do and consider how to support their next steps. As a Room Leader, I

understand the importance of providing activities that encourage children to explore, develop new challenging skills and become more independent.

Vygotsky (1978) introduced the concept of the Zone of Proximal Development, which explains how children can achieve more when supported by knowledgeable adults. For example, if a child is struggling to build a tower using blocks, a practitioner could demonstrate how to balance the blocks and encourage the child to try independently. This provides support while allowing the child to develop their own problem-solving skills.

Bruner's work also helps explain the importance of providing support during learning. His ideas are associated with scaffolding, where an adult provides temporary assistance that can be reduced as a child becomes more confident and capable (Bruner, 1983). In practice, this means giving children enough help to develop their skills without completing every task for them.

The Curriculum for funded non-maintained nursery setting in Wales emphasises developmentally appropriate learning, children's progression and responding to individual needs (Welsh Government, 2022). For example, if children show an interest in farm animals, practitioners could provide animal figures, books and role-play resources to encourage imaginative play, language development and social interaction. Activities can be adapted so children with different abilities can participate.

Therefore, observation, planning and appropriate adult support help practitioners provide inclusive learning experiences that reflect children's interests and support their individual development.

Inclusion and children's rights

Inclusive practice is important because every child should feel valued, respected and able to participate in activities. This demonstrates that inclusion means recognising that children have different abilities, backgrounds, interests and developmental needs. Practitioners should adapt their approach to ensure that children have suitable opportunities to learn and develop.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989) supports inclusive practice. Article 2 states that children should not experience discrimination, while article 3 emphasises the importance of considering their best interests. Article 31 also recognises children's right to rest, leisure and play (United Nations, 1989).

For example, if a child finds a particular activity difficult, a practitioner could adapt the resources, provide additional support or offer another way for the child to participate. This helps ensure that the child is included rather than excluded because of their individual needs.

The curriculum for funded non-maintained nursery settings in Wales also supports inclusive, developmentally appropriate learning experiences that take account of children's individual

development (Welsh government, 2022). Therefore, practitioners should reflect on their practice and consider whether all children can access the opportunities provided.

In my role, I understand that treating children fairly does not always mean treating them identically. Sometimes, children need different types of support to have equal opportunities to participate, develop confidence and achieve their potential.

Conclusion

In conclusion, professional practice is essential in early years, because it helps ensure that children's individual needs, rights and well-being are recognised and supported. Through my experience working with children, I understand the importance of effective communication, positive relationships and safeguarding in creating a safe environment for children and welcoming for parents/carers. Partnership working also helps practitioners and families work together to support the child's development. Furthermore, Vygotsky's and Bruner ideas help explain how appropriate adult support can encourage children's learning, confidence and independence. The Curriculum for funded non-maintained nursery settings in Wales also provides guidance for planning developmentally appropriate and inclusive learning experiences. The UNCRC reinforces the importance of respecting children's rights and respecting children's rights and considering their best interests. Overall, being a professional involves continually developing knowledge, reflecting on practice and making decisions that support the individual. By applying these principles, practitioners can help create an environment where every child feels valued, included and able to develop their own potential.

Reference list:

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- GOV.UK. (1989). *Children act 1989*. [Legislation.Gov.Uk](https://www.legislation.gov.uk).
- United Nations (1989) convention on the rights of the child. Geneva: United Nations.
- Bruner, J.S. (1983) *Child's Talk: Learning to Use Language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Children Act 1989, c. 41. Available at:
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