

Student number – 2501327

Word count - 2707

ECEY4009C

- A. I can confirm that I have not use any AI tools in the research and creation of this assignment. I confirm that I have not presented any AI generated materials as my own work. I confirm I have copies of my drafts, notes and other resources I used, which I may be asked to provide in evidence.

Professional practitioner portfolio

Component 1

Objective	Actions	Resources	Target date for achieving objective	Success criteria
To achieve a 2:2 grade in my degree	I will complete all assignments on time, to avoid having a mark cap, making sure each assignment is not rushed. I will seek feedback and support when I need it from my lecturers. I will aim to attend all lectures to understand key content that should be included in my final portfolios. I have set myself achievable targets, for example to study on the	I will use the reading resource list that is provided to us as well as looking for my own research. I will also use the Panopto's that are given to us through Moodle. I will use the University library to my advantage to support my assignments with academic evidence. I will seek peer support as well when needed, so far i have found this helpful,	July 2027 when my degree finishes	I will review my progress regularly with my lectures and regularly look for feedback to see where i can improve. I will look at feedback that I get from my assignments when they get marked. I will know I will have achieved this when I am in a cap and gown celebrating graduating with a 2:2 BA honours.

	weekend and 3 times throughout the week after work. I will take notes in my lectures to support my academic work.	even if it is just a positive message like “you can do this”.		
To develop my Welsh language skills	I will actively practice Welsh, seeking advice where possible. I will attend courses and consistently look for ways to improve my Welsh reading writing and speaking skills. I will seek advice from my colleagues and lectures.	I will use apps like Duolingo and ChatGPT to engage in Welsh language understanding , speaking and writing. I will look for websites that will support me improve my Welsh language skills.	Summer 2026	I have recorded what I currently know, and I will test my knowledge in routinely against this record. If my knowledge at the time of testing is better than the record i then will know i have achieved my goal of improving my Welsh language skills
To be promoted to key worker in work	I will continue in my role as a level 3 teaching assistant in my setting, Pupil inclusion centre where we specialise in social emotional behavioural difficulties. I will continue to seek advice	I will continue to research theories and professional advice on supporting children with social emotional behavioural difficulties. I will access the team teach website	September 2026	I will review my professional development plan with my line manager. I will know if I have achieved this goal by getting promoted after an interview. I hope to achieve this as I am very

	from more senior colleagues. I am currently being trained as an emotional literacy support assistant,	where they offer continued professional development opportunities.		happy in my setting.
--	---	--	--	----------------------

Component 2

What is reflection and reflective practise? Reflection involves thinking about our own experiences to think about what went well, what did not go well, and different actions will take place next time (Appleby and Andrews, in Reed and Canning, 2012). Reflective practice is the continuous and ongoing engagement with this process this could be everyday, where practitioners can think about what actions they took and how they can improve their professional abilities in the classroom.	Why is reflective practice important to early years practice This is a valuable process in an early year setting as it can improve the education and care that children receive, which ultimately will improve outcomes. practitioners engaging in reflective practice can remain responsive to children's needs and adapt to different situations that work for different children (Birthto5matters,2021)
The theory of reflective practise: A widely common theory around reflection is Schon. Schons theory concentrates on how practitioners learn via experiences, two types of reflection that is in his theory are reflection in action which requires you to think during the moment, to assess situations and change what you are doing. Then he discusses reflection on action which requires you to think about what happened after the situation, just like Appleby and Andrews, to assess what went well and what did no go well and what needs to change in future (Schon,2016). Two Widley used models for reflective practice are Gibb's reflective cycle model and Kolb's Experiential Learning cycle. Both Models promote practitioners to improve by reflecting on their experiences and apply that reflection to how they deliver care to children.	
Gibbs' model Gibbs' Reflective Cycle (1988) is quite a straightforward framework for reflection, comprising six stages: description, feelings, evaluation, analysis, conclusion, and action plan. One of the key strengths of Gibbs' model is its	Kolb's model Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle is also a widely used model for reflective practice that consists of four stages: concrete experience, reflective

detailed, step-by-step approach, which provides clear guidance for individuals to reflect on their experiences (Gibbs, 1988). This structure is particularly helpful in educational settings, as it promotes practitioners to think deeply about all aspects of a situation, from emotional responses to what has happened to think about possible different outcomes for next time.

observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation (Kolb, 1984). One of its strengths is that it encourages active learning and real use on the job ensuring that learning is based on real experiences, for practitioners this could be in the workplace. It allows individuals to reflect on what happened, think about why it occurred, and then apply these thoughts to future situations, promoting continuous professional development

Analysis of models – compare/contrast/pros/cons:

Both Gibbs' Reflective Cycle and Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle offer valuable and quite straight forward frameworks for reflective practice, both have some key strengths and land both have some imitations. Gibbs' model is ideal for beginners or those seeking a structured approach to reflection. It is clear, straight forward stages to follow guide individuals through the reflective process, ensuring a clear evaluation of their experiences (Gibbs, 1988). This makes it particularly effective in educational settings, where thorough reflection of experiences and the emotional responses that were felt during them can lead to meaningful improvements in practice (Gray, 2013). On the other hand, Gibbs' model is helpful for beginners, its strict format can hold back those who want more freedom and flexibility in how they reflect.

On the other hand, Kolb's cycle emphasizes a different approach, encouraging continuous learning and applying one's thoughts to real life situations Its strength lies in its focus on practical experience. (Kolb, 2015). Overall, both models contribute to reflective practice, and educators or professionals can choose to combine them based on their individual needs, and preferences. Both models promote lifelong learning, which is key to personal and professional growth in any field, it is important in early years settings as practitioners and professionals aim to give children a better learning experience

Conclusion

In conclusion, reflective practice and reflection are important parts of professional development for practitioners in early years settings and in education. They help practitioners think carefully about their on-the-job experiences in the setting, and recognize what went well, and identify what did not go so well, and to think about what can be improved to better support children's development and learning. Both Gibbs' Reflective Cycle and Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle provide useful for this process. Gibbs' model offers clear guidance and structure, making it ideal for those new to reflect, while Kolb's model focuses more on learning through experience. Using reflection and being a reflective practitioner is good as it regularly allows practitioners to keep improving their skills, helping them adapt to different situations every single day, and providing the best possible care and education for every child in the setting.

References

- Birth to 5 matters. (2021) Professional reflective practice. Available at: <https://birthto5matters.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/PDF-20-Professional-Reflective-Practice-1-1.pdf> (Accessed: 20 October 2025).
- Kolb, D. (1984) *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development*. Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall.
- Gibbs, G. (1998) *learning by doing; a guide to teaching and learning methods*. Further education unit. Oxford
- Gray, C. (2013) 'Reflective practice: experiential learning in the early years', *International journal of early years education*, 21(1), pp. 1–3. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669760.2013.782971>.
- Reed, M. and Canning, N. (2011) *Implementing quality improvement and change in the early years*. London, Sage Publications.
- Schön, D. (2016) *The reflective practitioner : how professionals think in action*. England: Routledge

Component 3 of assignment

Introduction

A professional according to Chalke (2013) refers to those who have expertise such as knowledge, understanding the values of their field and having the skills to be a good practitioner in the field that they work in. Additionally, Both Perez (2019) and McGillivray (2008) suggest that being a skilled professional means practitioners are guided by their knowledge and values, they both also suggest that personal qualities are important. Good professionals have a skill to work with and as part of a team and recognise the importance of working part of a team, and to realise that every member of the team has a role and that role should be clearly defined. A good professional and practitioner also have sound knowledge of the policies that effect their workplace, in the early years settings these can include safeguarding policies and the curriculum for non-maintained nursery settings.

Values

Values are important to professional practice as they guide the way practitioners work and links everything together in the early years' settings. The code of professional conduct and practice for registered practitioners (Education workforce council, 2019) and the professional standards for teaching and leadership (Welsh government, 2017)

outline the importance of practitioners and professionals being honest and respectful in their roles and being honest with colleagues as part of a team. Holding these values in high regard can support children's equity and inclusion in the setting. Powell (2010) states that practitioners should have a set of simple skills, that all practitioners that working with children should have, that include a genuine sense of wanting to help children improve their skills, being honest in the setting, professionalism and patience and an ability to support children including their families. Powell further states and emphasises that children need to feel safe in the setting and parents expect this, as they are trusting practitioners with their children.

Values can support settings and Practitioners be inclusive as they promote professionals to the child as an individual and to see their needs, values also are key as they promote practitioners to see the impact and the team that they work with are having on the child's life. Values also help professionals who they want to be like as practitioners. Practitioners should also be committed to professional development and committed to work part of a team and recognise their importance as part of that team. (the general teaching council for Scotland, 2021).

Communication, relationships, and teamwork

Dunhill, Elliot and shaw (2009) says that excellent communication is key to success when working with families and children and being able to recognise what they are communicating is an important skill. Wilson (2025) also says that now more than ever the importance of working with families is being recognised and says that children can benefit from positive relationships between practitioners and parents. Wilson further says that practitioners and settings should treat each family with individuality, which is an inclusive approach, and should be open to new ideas with each family. Settings can build wonderful relationships by inviting parents in to see the setting, doing home visits and consistent and open communication. Wilson also says that settings being inclusive also means that all communication should be in the parents' home language and being open and understanding that communication for parents may be difficult.

Furthermore, According to Parenta (2013) Effective teamwork between practitioners can support the setting develop to support children thrive. The article places emphasis on practitioners being good communicators with each other, children, and families. The article further says that active listening is an important part of communication and an important part of being a practitioner, the ability to listen to others and respond. Providing constructive feedback and praise can support everyone who cares for, and those who work with children. Parenta further says that open communication can create an environment that encourages practitioners to share their ideas, thoughts, and feelings, and will create a better atmosphere for the children to learn in.

Knowledge of policies and the importance of implementation

Dates wrote on VComply Technologies Inc (2024) says that professional practitioners need to understand their workplaces policy, and each workplace should have clear policies outlined and it is every professional's responsibility to know the policies in place. This is the case for early years settings, a key policy and one that each practitioner should be actively involved in is the safeguarding of children and young people. Safeguarding policies are in place to ensure that children are kept safe from harm, they are also in place to guide staff to ensure that they know what to do when they have safeguarding concerns (social care Wales, 2025) staff and settings have a duty to report any concerns of abuse or neglect. Social care Wales further states that settings have a duty to ensure that practitioners have appropriate safeguarding training.

Another key policy for settings is the curriculum for non-maintained nursery settings, which outlines how schools and nursery settings should educate and support children's learning (Welsh Government, 2022). The document states that all practitioners should enabling and promote children's learning and development through curiosity, and natural teachable moments. The document if applied appropriately to settings is an inclusive one as it is not content based, it promotes children learning at their own pace. Learning in these settings following the non-maintained curriculum should be play based, all children have a right to play (unicef,2016) play supports children's physical and cognitive development. The document also says that children should be encouraged to be outdoors as much as possible to support their motor function skills, children also learn via all their senses,

what they can hear, what they can smell and what they can see. All these principles allow children to have a sense of belonging in their setting and community.

Supporting children's rights in the setting

The rights of the child intertwines between everything early years practitioners do in the setting, and what the government base their policy and laws around, there is 54 articles on the right of the child, the first 42 are set out for the child and then the rest are for the government to write law and policy around when it comes to effecting children (save the children, ND.) and key articles include article 28 which is the right to an education, which states that every child has the right to a free education in primary and secondary school and article 31 which is the right to play (UNICEF, 2016).

Another right the child has is article 3 (best interests of the child) which states that every decision should be what is best for that child and decisions must be made in a priority order, this can be achieved by reflection and reflective practice. Actively speaking to the children about their rights can reinforce the idea of an inclusive setting, for example article number 12 says that practitioners should respect children's views, children should be encouraged to speak about their opinions on different issues and different stuff that goes on in the setting, for example what they learn. An inclusive central article is article 23 which says children who have disability have the right to live a full life, settings who are inclusive can implement this right by ensuring that children who have disabilities are not disadvantaged in the setting, practitioners should have appropriate training.

Respecting and upholding children's rights maintains professional practice and creates an environment where children feel safe, secure, and heard. Additionally, Murray, Blue and Smith (2019) emphasises the importance of the value of these rights and say that the policy that states the rights of children is not important if practitioners, government, and settings are not upholding them and putting them into practice each day.

Conclusion

To conclude, a skilled professional and practitioner ensures that values, effective communication, teamwork, policy knowledge, and a daily commitment to children's rights is at the forefront of their daily work. Together, all these things create a positive nurturing, inclusive, and professional environment where every child can learn, develop and grow every single day. A good understanding of policy that effect the workplace makes a practitioner, professional. Having the skills, such as effective communication, teamwork and nurturing can make a setting so much better. Effective communication can make practitioners better team players, Practitioners and professionals ensuring values such as honesty, respect, and inclusivity remain at the forefront of their work can make sure that practitioners create an environment where every child feels valued, heard, and safe.

References

- Chalke, J. (2013) 'Will the Early Years Professional Please Stand Up? Professionalism in the Early Childhood Workforce in England,' *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood*, 14(3).
- Dunhill, A., Elliott, B. and Shaw, A. (2009) *Effective communication and engagement with children and young people, their families, and carers*. Exeter: Learning Matters.
- Education Workforce Council (2019) *Code of professional conduct and practice for registered practitioners*. Available at: <https://www.ewc.wales/site/index.php/en/fitness-to-practise/code-of-professional-conduct-and-practice> (Accessed: 24 October 2025).
- McGillivray, G. (2008) 'Nannies, nursery nurses and early years professionals: constructions of professional identity in the early years workforce in England', *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal*, 16(2), pp. 242–254.
- Murray, J., Blue Swadener, B. and Smith, K. (Eds.) (2019) *The Routledge International Handbook of Young Children's Rights* (1st ed.). Routledge. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780367142025> (Accessed: 21 October 2025).
- Parenta (2023) *Teamwork and collaboration*. Available at: <https://www.parenta.com/2023/04/01/teamwork-and-collaboration/> (Accessed: [21 October 2025]).

Perez, R. (2019) 'What Does It Mean to Be a Professional?', *Professional Case Management*, 24(4), p. 212.

Powell, S. (2010) 'Hide and Seek: Values in Early Childhood Education and Care', *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 58(2), pp. 213–229. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/00071001003752195> (Accessed: 21 October 2025).

Save the Children UK (n.d.) *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)*. Available at: <https://www.savethechildren.org.uk/what-we-do/childrens-rights/united-nations-convention-of-the-rights-of-the-child> (Accessed: 21 October 2025).

Social Care Wales (2025) *Safeguarding – resources and guidance*. Available at: <https://socialcare.wales/resources-guidance/safeguarding-list> (Accessed: 21 October 2025)

The General Teaching Council for Scotland (2021) *Professional Values in Action*. Available at: <https://www.gtcs.org.uk/professional-standards/professional-values-into-action.aspx#:~:text=Professional%20values%20into%20action%20The%20professional%20values%20of,relevant%20to%20all%20registered%20teachers%20regardless%20of%20post> (Accessed: 19 October 2025).

UNICEF (2016) *Children's rights*. Available at: <https://www.unicef.org.uk/what-we-do/un-convention-child-rights/> (Accessed: 20 October 2025).

VComply Technologies Inc. (2024) *Understanding the importance and purpose of policies in the workplace*. Available at: <https://www.v-comply.com/blog/why-is-a-policy-important-workplace/> (Accessed: 25 October 2025).

Welsh Government (2022) *A Curriculum for Funded Non-Maintained Nursery Settings*. Cardiff: Welsh Government. Available at: <https://hwb.gov.wales/api/storage/1f581142-6b91-41e4-845d-3d6c7765df20/a-curriculum-for-funded-non-maintained-nursery-settings.pdf> (Accessed: 24 October 2025).

Wilson, T. (2024) *Working with parents, carers, and families in the early years: the essential guide* (2nd ed.). London: Routledge. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003429562>.

