

ECEY6004

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### Part 1

Part 1 of this assignment aims to demonstrate what inclusive leadership is in an Early Years Setting, what challenges may come with being an inclusive leader and the impact it has overall on practitioners, children and their families.

Thomas (2022) states that inclusive practice in an early years setting is allowing every individual child to have the opportunity to have the same access to tools, resources and environment that can allow children to have the chance to thrive. Inclusive practice can promote different backgrounds, cultures, religious beliefs, special educational needs and disabilities.

Children are unique, they work at different speeds and learn in different ways. Inclusive practice supports children by treating them equally and acknowledging their own individual needs which can help children to feel as if they belong in their setting. Furthermore, Early Years Alliance (2015) supports that equality for children can help allow children to reach their full potential and have a fair opportunity to experience life as they choose. Children have the right to be included in their setting and obstacles or barriers that can deny equality for the children should be addressed. Children that are affected by inequality in their early years can have low self-esteem and lower their ability to trust others which can have an impact on their life chances.

According to Childhood Education International (2021) when analysing inclusive education, it is also essential to understand the importance of equity. The wording equity and equality having a different outcome in learning and participation and access. Equality means treating everyone the same, while equity means ensuring that every child has the correct support that they require to develop and learn. Equity in education demands leaders to acknowledge the unique challenges for children and their families and discover solutions to overcome the challenges that they are facing.

Ferdman (2020) states inclusive leadership are leaders that promote experiences of inclusion for everyone across many identities and that supports development in work environments, organizations, communities. Good inclusive leadership can be achieved through understanding and being able to create opportunities that can be beneficial for all types of diversity. An inclusive leader allows everyone to feel as if they belong with their difference which can allow them to feel valued and safe.

According to Cologon (2014) inclusive education involves accepting and including human diversity and valuing and supporting their belonging, this involves holding the rights for all children to experience education free from discriminatory beliefs and attitudes. This can be achieved by the setting having policies and practices in place for inclusive values. Inclusive education benefits everyone, children's learning outcomes improve and are more positive. Furthermore, children learn and develop in ways that they would not be able to if they were segregated. Practitioners are more flexible skilled, confident and competent when they are inclusive.

## Scenario

Ben is a 4 year old child that lives with his father fulltime after separating from Ben's mother who he or Ben is no longer in contact with. Ben's father is a recovering from a drug addiction and has been accepted to have Ben in his care. Ben does well at school, however he does not socialise with many children in his class during activities or free play, Ben's father also does not socialise with any of the children's parents at the setting at drop off or collection as he and other parents do not engage with each other. Ben's father will speak to practitioners within the setting when is needed but does not attend any parents' gatherings outside school.

Multi-agencies are able to work together with Ben and his father to support Ben's well-being and offer a range of services that can support Ben's father through his recovery. Multi- agency are able to identify any risks that children may be experiencing and take action to safeguard and protected child (NSPCC, 2023). According to UNICEF (No date) article 9, children must not be separated from their parents unless they have been experiencing harm or neglect by their parents and that it would be in the child's best interest to be separated for their parents. Parents are able to stay in contact with their children if they have been separated unless it will cause harm to the child and the parents have been asked not to. As ben's father is a recovering drug user and is not causing any harm or neglecting Ben, therefore Ben is able to stay in the care of his father.

Ben has a social worker that workers with Ben and his father to support Ben's development, well-being and to give extra support. Social workers are able to undertake a risk assessment which will indicate what support Ben and his father need to meet their needs. A social worker is able to provide family support by providing parenting classes, practical home help and use different health, education or voluntary organisations, such as single parent organisation which can support Ben's father by providing help, advise and support. Social workers can suspect when a child is at risk and needs protection to keep the child safe from any sort of harm and to ensure that their welfare is protect (NHS, 2020). Article 24, every child has the right to the best possible health outcomes, the government must provide children with quality health care (UNICEF, No Date).

Brandon et al (2011) states that practitioners should be able to identify when a child is not meeting their developmental potential or when a child is showing risky or harmful behaviour. Furthermore, Wilkinson (2020) states that practitioners have vital role in safeguarding children and promoting their welfare under the education Act 2002. Practitioners are able to build relationships with children in their setting which can indicate signs of harm or abuse. Practitioners have the duty to allow children to be in a safe environment, where they can adopt positive relationships and report concerns that they have on children.

It is important that practitioners are inclusive to all different types of families when communicating, during assignments and in the setting. Children that come from diverse families such as a single parent like Ben's father achieve better outcomes in education and their well-being is supported when practitioners are welcoming of these difference, furthermore it allows other practitioners and other children in the setting to accept the difference as well. Practitioners are able to offer books that can

help describe and explain different family experiences that can allow Ben and other children to gain more of an understanding. Practitioners are able to use a range of inclusive language in the setting to support this. (Granata, No date)

According to Patel (2018) diverse books that can allow children to become familiar with different types of families. By Ben having access to these books will allow him to learn and understand how different people live in different ways.

The scenario mentions that Ben lives with only his father and does not have any form of contact with his mother. Gov UK (No Date) states that from the birth of the child the mother automatically has parental responsibility, and the father has parental responsibility if he is married to the mother of the child or if he is listed on the birth certificate.

According to Kelly (2016) The separation of a child's parents can be difficult on children in the early years, therefore it is important that practitioners are able to support the child and their family through this period. Practitioners should engage with the children to allow the children to express their feelings. The separation can have a massive impact on the child's development. Many parents will inform the practitioners of their situation, this will allow practitioners to support the child as some children may become angry while other children may be quiet during the changes that they are experiencing at home. Some parents may experience a separation where one parent is absent from a child's life, causing their home life to have a massive change. If a parent informs the setting that the other parent is not allowed to collect their child, the practitioners will need to check to see if the other parent has parental responsibility for the child.

Brennan (2021) states that there are many reasons why a child can be brought up with just one of their parents. In some cases single parents can find it difficult to support children to achieve their best potential, this may be as single parents are more likely to work more hours and do not have enough time to support the child with their learning. However, some children from single parent families grow up happy and successfully with the correct care and support. As Ben's mother is no longer in contact with Ben this could have an impact on him emotionally. According to Schrader (2018) Children that experience a loss with a parent, either through death, abandonment or parent separation can lead the child to experience fear, panic, grief or depression. If a child is not receiving emotional support through this period of time it can have a negative impact on the child emotionally throughout their life as they may lack the ability to learn, play or engage in life. The child may also believe that they may be the cause of the separation which can lead to anger and children may find it difficult to trust others in relationships. Perhaps this is the reason why Ben finds it difficult to engage with other children in his setting.

Murray and Ganmin (2018) states that children's friendships allow opportunities for sharing, learning, excitement, support, advice and friendships that will last long-term. Having friends in a setting can improve children's well-being, engagement to learning and improve their learning outcomes. Friendships are an important factor in children's social, emotional, psychological and moral development. Children that are unable to make friends with children in their setting are more likely to suffer from

depression and anxiety which can lead them to feel unhappy and at higher risk of poor learning outcomes. Children may find it difficult to form friendships with others as they have learning difficulties, different backgrounds, if they are angry or aggressive, overweight or if the child is shy.

According to Wardman (2018) Practitioners are able support Ben to gain positive friendships in the setting, this can be achieved by practitioners providing opportunities for children to take part in activities through learning and play where they are able to make friends. Practitioners are able to teach children to be inclusive by discussing difference and how to care about other children's feelings.

Ben will be able to progress his social skills with support from practitioners, some children find it more difficult than others as they can find it challenging to engage with other children and adults. Practitioners are able to show communicating through role plays and storytelling. By practitioners talking to children about what they are doing can help extend children's language, children can also extend their vocabulary from children around them. This can help Ben to gain confidence with interacting with others (Action For Children, No Date).

In the scenario it mentions that Ben's father does not engage with the other children's parents and that they do not engage him into their conversations. Other parents may be aware that Ben's father is a recovering from being addicted to drugs and that they have lower income than they do.

Bardsley (2013) states that young single parents are often labelled with a negative stigma for becoming parents at a young age, this can allow single parents to have lower self-esteem and struggle with education and work. Newly single parents often worry about the stigma that they may face. Furthermore, Weed and Nicholson (2014) state that young single fathers may experience more stigma than young mothers. Single fathers are often seen as being absent, criminal, violent and socially excluded while mothers are seen as poor, lonely and vulnerable.

According to Goldberg, Allen and Carroll (2020) parents involvement with other parents in an early years setting can provide guidance, connections and support parents involvement with the setting which can support children academically and their development.

Wood (No Date) States that settings are able to do coffee mornings within the setting to help parents form relationships with other parents in the setting. Once relationships are built in the settings, parents are most likely to be more involved in the setting which can have a positive impact on children's social and emotional needs as well as their learning.

The scenario also states that Ben's father drops off and collects Ben quickly and only stops to speak to the practitioners if or when is needed.

According to Sapungan and Sapungan (2014) Parent's involvement in children's learning is extremely beneficial, it allows parents to help children's learning process and offer support where there needs to allow children to achieve better in their academic achievements in all subjects and support behaviour, social changes and their attitudes.

Nursery resources (2019) states that communication between practitioners and children's parents is important in the early years, it allow discussions about the child to take place. By practitioners and parents communicating will allow both parties to share concerns on the child and allow advice to be given to support children's development in a safe environment. Some parents feel less represented than others this includes fathers, parents who live away from their children and working parents. Different communication strategies may be needed to involve the parents. According to Kelly (2015) Practitioners should be aware of the importance of building relationships with parents and carers of the children that are in their early years setting. Practitioners should take into account that children come from different backgrounds with different cultures, religions and languages. Efficient communication between practitioners and parents will allow parents to become more involved in their child's learning process and practitioners are able to share what their children have done in the setting and what they have achieved throughout their day. Practitioners should make time to speak to parents at drop off and collections to communicate information, this will furthermore build positive relationships between practitioners and parents which will enable parents to raise any concerns and seek advice.

## Part 2

Early years careers (2017) states that policies and procedures are vital to any childcare setting or organisation in the early years as it strengthen the practice that happens in the setting and ensures that all legislation that is necessary is met. Policies are used within settings to think in a coherent way to achieve the outcomes that the setting wants, policies can be used in general or used on a particular concern (Baldock, Fitzgerald and Kay, 2013). According to Waltham Forest Council (No Date) policies and procedures are used by practitioners to provide clear guidance and ensure consistency. Policies support the well-being of children, families, staff and anyone that is in the early years setting and ensures good practice.

The policy and guidance that will be discussed during part 2 of this assignment is the new Welsh Curriculum (Welsh Government, 2022a). The Welsh Government (2021) states that the curriculum for Wales aims to ensure good education for all children and promote lifelong learning, whilst inspiring all children and young people in Wales. The curriculum for Wales guidance sets out legislation for all learners aged 3 to 16 across Wales to ensure that all school settings have the same teaching outcomes and approach of learning. The aim of the curriculum is guidance is to support school in creating their own curriculum where practitioners can encourage individual and national well-being, tackle ignorance and misinformation, and encourage critical and civic engagement. According to Welsh Government (2020) for practitioners to get ready for the new curriculum in Wales requires strong personal and professional leaders in the setting, practitioners should work together, understand their roles and responsibility and support the setting with the curriculum. By practitioners working together using the curriculum will help assist children to

develop higher education standards overall.

Furthermore, Welsh Government (No Date) states that the settings new curriculum can allow children to gain knowledge, skills and experience by practitioners.

Practitioners are able to use the guidance to plan creative learning for all children for their future. The new curriculum for Wales will allow children to gain skills and experiences to grow whilst supporting children to develop into ambitious, capable learners, healthy, confident individuals, enterprising, creative contributors and ethical informed citizens under the four purposes of the Wales curriculum.

Welsh Government (2022b) states that the Wales curriculum 2022 is a key milestone for school and settings across Wales, there is every purpose to be positive with the progress to date, whilst acknowledging that there is more than can be done over time.

According to Edwards (2021) practitioners and school settings have shown excitement towards the opportunities that the curriculum for Wales can provide.

Practitioners have been able to demonstrate an understanding of what the curriculum for Wales entails. School settings are concentrating on improving their teaching and learning where they are able to develop strong, ambitious visions for their curriculum to support children's outcomes inclusively. According to Robinson (2022) the new curriculum for Wales allowed practitioners to have more freedom to develop pedagogical approaches in their setting to ensure that all children's needs are met. However, some practitioners were questioning the changes within the curriculum. Practitioners have the responsibility to ensure that all children can fulfil the four purposes. When the new curriculum was introduced, there was a desire from practitioners for positive changes to be introduced with the new curriculum, for settings to achieve the four purposes for children depended on how well practitioners and school settings are able to demonstrate these purposes.

Wightwick (2022) states that the new curriculum for Wales is more relevant, captivating and bespoke for each school which can support children for their future more than the old curriculum for Wales would have been able to. The old curriculum for Wales was based on knowledge, where the new curriculum is set out to be more interactive for children's learning. The new curriculum allows practitioners and children to have more of a choice on what they are wanting to learn or teach, allowing children and practitioners to gain a better relationship which also support their learning.

### Part 3

This blog aims to promote the role of fathers with the young children and promote inclusive leadership. This blog will discuss and highlight fathers and how father figures play a part in their children's development and how practitioners can encourage participation and engagement.

Lansford (2021) states that Mothers are often seen as the children's primary caregivers and fathers are more defined as children's playmates. However, over time many countries have placed mothers and fathers as equal. Fathers play an important role in children's development and can have a positive effect on children's social skills, education, how they deal with their emotions and have an impact on their wellbeing. A good relationship between a father and their child overall is beneficial for the

child.

According to Hardach (No Date) the role that fathers play in a children's development was not studied until the 1970s. Fathers were seen as supporting the mother financially which would have allowed the mother to support the child. Fathers relationship to the child was viewed secondary to the relationship of the mother. Children that are engaged with their fathers have better mental development and are at a lower risk of developing behaviour problems later on in life and improved children's cognitive skills.

Ancell, Bruns, and Chitiyo (2018) states that father's involvement in a child's life can not only support children's development but furthermore extend their knowledge and allows fathers to have involvement with practitioners who are part of the children's life's. The fathers actively participating in a child's life can additionally be beneficial for the fathers as well as the children's development, it allows fathers to gain self- assurance and be successful and capable in the role as parent. Fathers find the role and responsibilities of being a parent more satisfying and are encouraged to take part in their children's lives.

Fathers are taking on more of caregiver roles with children more than in the past years. Fathers time that is spent with children may be limited due to work demands and some fathers may lack in confidence to engage in areas of bring a child up. Since the covid pandemic fathers feel as if their relationship with their children has developed closer as fathers were able to talk to their children more often, which allow the fathers to find out about their children's interests and appreciated their children more. When children have a good relationship with their fathers, it can allow children not to feel unwanted by their fathers and furthermore support the fathers healthy development (Weissbourd et al., 2020). According to Croner-I (2015) fathers are now spending more time with their children, practitioners have seen an increase in fathers or male carers dropping off and picking up their children. The main barriers that could affect fathers involvement in the early years setting may be due to the lack of skills that practitioners have to involve fathers in the setting and the lack of communication fathers have with practitioners. By practitioners not involving fathers in letters or emails can reduce the opportunities for fathers to take part in activities that the provision can offer. Early years setting are able to ensure that fathers feel welcome and engaged in their children's life by addressing letters or emails to both parents rather than just the mother of the child. Practitioners are able to engage with fathers at drop off and collections by welcoming them and encouraging fathers to talk about their child's day, which can allow fathers to share information on the child and practitioners. Early years settings need to ensure that the setting is a father friendly and inclusive for male carers as well as mothers.

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