

Introduction

- Education is key to a working society across the world. Not every person will encounter a doctor, police officer, receptionist or mechanic as long as they will for a teacher. School plays a pivotal role in every person's life across the nation, it helps define who they are because school is the bridge between the child, the home, the local and wider community. Through the teaching of language, faith and socioeconomics, learners can develop as a capable person that "respect the needs and rights of others, as a member of a diverse society." (Donaldson, 2015)



Language



- Language plays a big part for people to embrace their national identity, heritage and culture. Everyone has at least one language they speak which allows them to connect to numerous other people sharing ideas, thoughts and beliefs. This makes it extremely important in a child's holistic development.
- Wales is no different with the Welsh government aiming to have "one million Welsh speakers by 2050." (Welsh Government, 2016) Showing that the Welsh government realises that keeping the language alive is important for the nation's cultural identity, which is in line with article eight of the United Nations Rights of The Child, stating "Every child has the right to an identity." (UN General Assembly, 1989)
- My placement school takes pride in being a Welsh school and tries to push all children to the best of their ability, this is very evident through their Ciriw Cymraeg policy. This is a group of students elected by each class to meet up every week to fulfil the goal of improving the amount of Welsh used throughout the school and to increase the amount of Welsh displayed throughout the school. This allows children from all the years, across the school, to connect, bond and work together to create a more unified cultural identity that will bring every student closer together. This will also apply to non-Welsh students that have moved in from another country.
- There are two Polish students in my class that speak English as their second language and struggle to communicate effectively to others. Instead of this getting in the way, the class teacher uses this as an opportunity to explore a different language and culture for everyone. The two Polish students are encouraged to teach the class Polish to make it easier for the Polish students to assimilate into the class, but also spread their culture and traditions to the class to make Wales seem less of a foreign country and more like home.
- Students learning Welsh from a young age with the help of adults would go with Bruner's language development theory, scaffolding.

Start at my feet

Jerome Bruner

- "Scaffolding refers to the steps taken to reduce the degrees of freedom in carrying out some task so that the child can concentrate on the difficult skill she/he is in the process of acquiring." (Bruner, 1978, p. 19)
- The term scaffolding was coined by Jerome Bruner who stressed the importance of adult intervention for child support. Scaffolding involves interpersonal interaction between an adult and a child with the goal of helping the child perform a task. Children's brains are more receptive to language because they have just acquired that skill so it would be the perfect time to introduce a new language like Welsh to further develop their language, literacy and communication skills.



- Teaching religion in the foundation phase is an educational activity not designed to urge religious beliefs on pupils, as Brucker (2015) argues that children are susceptible to the indoctrination of religions at an early age because they haven't fully developed their cognitive skills. It comprises of a study of religions and allows children to explore and express their feelings and beliefs.
- Many students in my placement have contrasting religious beliefs but no discrimination can be found in the school because the school and students are very aware of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The school has been awarded gold status for the 'Rights Respecting School Award (RRSA)', which is the highest accreditation a school can receive. What helped them get this was a policy put in place to create school rights ambassadors. This is a committee of students across the school that meet every two weeks to share any views or ideas from their class to "ensure that pupil voices are being heard" and to "ensure that all children at the school are aware of the UNCRC and that their rights are met." (Cadle Primary School, 2019)
- The school's largest religious minority is Sunni Islam, for these student rights ambassadors are a way that other students can learn and respect about their religion and everyone can cooperate and learn together without discrimination. Another way of respecting religious minorities is having a Halal option for school meals. Also throughout the school displays about religion include lots of types of religions, even those not found in the school. Buddhism, Islam, Sikhism, Hinduism, Christianity and Judaism are all found side by side telling stories about the Prophet Muhammad and the Revelation of the Qur'an alongside stories of Noah's Ark.



£££ Socio-economic



- My placement school is situated in the suburbs of Swansea, in a ward called Penderry. Penderry is Swansea's most deprived ward. Just under half of its 12,000 residents live in rented council properties, homeownership levels were at 34%, compared to a 64% Swansea-wide average. 42% of people aged 16-plus had no qualifications, compared to the 24% Swansea norm, according to a census for the City and County of Swansea (Office for National Statistics, 2011).
- The deprivation of the local area is also seen within the school with 35% of the students eligible for free school meals, compared to the national average of 16% (Welsh Government, 2019). The school is aware of the area they are based in and understand that many students will struggle academically and will need a lot of resources and help to maximise their potential in school. Save the Children states "In the UK, children from lower-income families are 50% less likely to do as well at school as their classmates." (Save the Children, 2019)
- To combat this the school has weekly sessions called "Mindfulness and Well-Being for Parents" where the school will look at strategies that could support parents in making sure that the learning does not stop when school ends but continues after school. Another way of supporting families that struggle economically is setting up a uniform shop where school uniform can be bought at a cheap price in the school's reception.

Lev Vygotsky

- Vygotsky's theories on cognitive development has two main principles:
 - More Knowledgeable Other
 - Zone of Proximal Development
- More knowledgeable other refers to someone like a teacher or parent that has a better understanding than the learner to a specific task. But this is integrated to the second principle the Zone of Proximal Development.
- McLeod (2018) states is the difference between what a child can achieve independently and what a child can achieve with guidance and encouragement from a skilled partner.
- This theory directly correlates to teachers engaging their students in class and parent involvement in school and at home. If both are done well children could reach the second level of the Zone of Proximal Development and more academically successful improving the chances of children helping themselves and their family come out of poverty.

Tasks that
learner can do
without
assistance

Tasks that
learner can do
only with
assistance

Tasks that
learner cannot
do even with
assistance

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