

**A critical evaluation and the identification of next
teaching and learning steps focusing on a case
study of an individual learner or a group of learners,
based on an observed critical incident**

Introduction

The development of critically reflective practitioners who are actively engaged with research and constantly enhancing their professional practice is essential for the implementation of the 'Curriculum 2020' as proposed in the Successful Futures document (Donaldson, 2015; Lee and Richings, 2018, p. 2; Welsh Government, 2017a; Welsh Government, 2019). That said, the new professional standards for teachers encourages all educational practitioners to critically reflect, evaluate and as a result adjust their teaching practice to promote high-quality and professional learning (Fook, 2015; Welsh Government, 2017b). This type of practice is called 'reflective practice' and it encourages practitioners to think about their approach to teaching, determining what went well and what could have been done better and what to do next. Teachers often reflect on their teaching through the analysis of critical incidents (Farrell, 2008, p. 3). Whilst the word critical may suggest the occurrence of something negative, critical incidents are simply unplanned and unanticipated events which are rendered critical through analysis (Joshi, 2018, p. 82 and Tripp, 2011). Tripp (2011) describes a critical incident as the "interpretation of the significance of an event." Critical incidents are therefore events which can be used proactively to inform practitioners of why an event occurred and what could be done to enhance learning or avoid the situation from reoccurring (Heikonen et al., 2017, p. 537). This critical evaluation will describe how an observed critical incident relates to the current literature surrounding the theories of teaching and will be reflected upon and critically evaluated in order to inform the future practice of the observer.

Observation

Four observations were carried out within a school setting in order to identify a critical incident. According to point 40 of the BERA guidelines, the school discussed in this critical incident evaluation is entitled to remain confidential and will therefore be referred to as School X to ensure anonymity (BERA, 2018). School X is an English-medium comprehensive school in South Wales for approximately 480 pupils between the ages of 11 and 16. The school is made up of 5-year groups: years 7-11, 2 special teaching facilities (STFs) and 35 teaching and support staff. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is around 27.2%, which is above the national average of 16.6% for Wales and also above the Swansea local authority average of 18.3% (Estyn, 2014; Welsh Government, 2018).

In short, School X's vision is to provide high quality, inclusive teaching and learning experiences whilst simultaneously developing the pupil's social skills and engagement with the local environment. The school has high expectations for every pupil and aims to maximise every pupil's potential within a safe, caring and supportive environment in order to prepare them for their lives as young adults and beyond. In order to aid the development of these skills, School X uses a school wide ethos of, "*READY, RESPECTFUL and SAFE.*" *READY* meaning that the pupils are ready and prepared to learn, *RESPECTFUL* being that the students behave in a manner which is respectful to those around them, whether they are teachers or other pupils and *SAFE* meaning that the pupils are safe in the manner they move about the school and in the way that they work (School X, 2019).

In order to identify a critical incident a case study was performed. Yin (1984) and Merriam (1988) (summarised in Cohen and Manion, 2011) both describe a case study as consisting of three steps. Yin (1984) describes a case study using the following three steps: exploratory, descriptive and explanatory. Merriam (1988) is also in agreement with Yin (1984) by describing a case study as being: descriptive, interpretive and evaluative. This particular critical evaluation focuses on a case study which was performed following the steps as laid out by Merriam (see Figure 1).

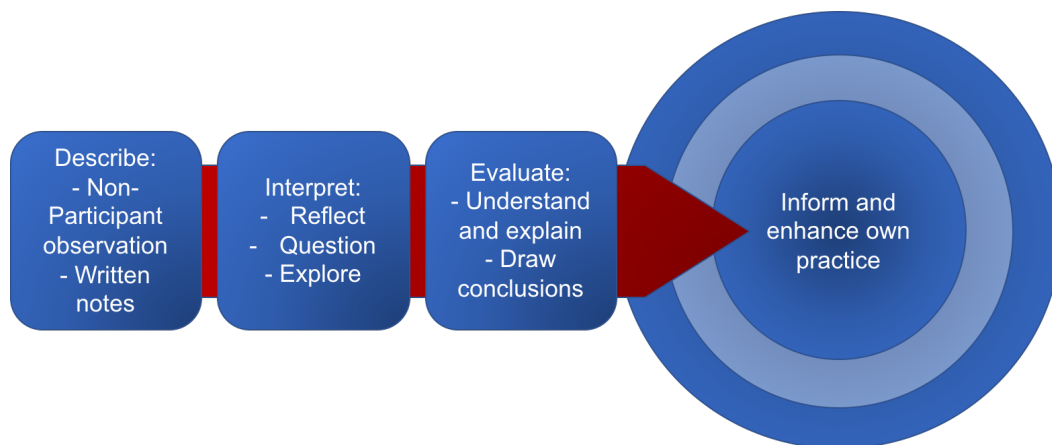


Figure 1: A description of the steps taken to complete this particular case study

The case study involved a year 7 form group who were observed for the entire day and in particular one gifted and talented (GAT) pupil. The case study was performed by capturing a real-life incident (Cohen and Manion, 2011) within the classroom through the means of non-participant observation and descriptive note-taking. Once the incident had been identified, it was critically evaluated. In the first instance, information associated with the incident was gathered from all available sources, such as academic literature and professional publications. The incident was then analysed and interpreted according to the literature in order to develop a more deep and holistic understanding of the incident to evaluate the outcome and to inform the next teaching steps (Kumar, 2011).

Even though found to be incredibly useful, case studies by observation may also allow for the introduction of bias if the observer is not careful, as a result the following steps were taken in order to minimise these risks. Written observation field notes (see Appendices) were taken at the time of the observation in order to avoid overlooking data through the influence of a selective memory and potential selective data entry. The observer also attempted to remove any personal bias from the note taking by recording exactly what was observed or verbalised at the exact time it was observed where ever possible (Cohen and Manion, 2011). This method of quick and accurate note taking was used in accordance with suggestions laid out by Lofland (1971) as summarised by Cohen and Manion (2011). The observer then also reflected on the situation immediately after the observation occurred using the Assisted Reflective Conclusions (ARC) model provided by the University of Wales, Trinity St. David (see Appendices). This was done whilst the event was at the forefront of the observer's memory to ensure an accurate and valid reflection. However, even with all these controls in place, some bias such as the change in the behaviour of the pupils due to the awareness of being observed, otherwise known as the Hawthorn effect (McCambridge, Witton and Elbourne, 2014, p. 267) was harder

to control. The method of non-participant observation method was therefore chosen over the method of participant observation. Kumar (2011) describes participant observation as a research method that is advantageous for developing a deeper and more accurate understanding of the situation. However, Kumar (2011) also highlights the disadvantage which is the potential to introduce bias. As a result, non-participant observation was chosen to ensure minimal bias by the observer and to maintain the spontaneity and authenticity of the event (Cohen & Manion, 2011).

The Donaldson Review (2015) describes the importance of educating and developing children and young people according to the following four purposes. Children and young people should be 1) ambitious, capable learners, 2) enterprising, creative contributors, 3) ethical, informed citizens and 4) healthy, confident individuals. The review also states that these four purposes should “guide all future decisions about national and local educational priorities and underpin all teaching and learning in Wales” (Donaldson, 2015). With this in mind, the critical incident described here will be evaluated with the following three of the four purposes in mind: All children and young people will be ambitious, capable learners, enterprising, creative contributors and ethical, informed citizens.

It was the last lesson of the morning before lunch and the year 7 pupils were making their way to their music lesson. It quickly became clear that pupil A was very excited, he was running down the corridor singing, “music, music, music.” When the year 7 class arrived at the classroom, they found that the teacher was late to the lesson. All of the pupils, apart from pupil A automatically followed the school ethos of being “*READY, RESPECTFUL and SAFE*” and lined up outside to wait for the teacher to arrive. However, pupil A entered the classroom and started playing a difficult piece on the piano with ease. Moments later the teacher arrived and instructed the rest of the class to enter the room. It was at this point that instead of disciplining pupil A, the teacher praised him and took a seat beside him at the piano. The teacher then instructed pupil A to carry on playing and began to play the harmony to the piece. The teacher used this incident which had the potential to disrupt the start of the lesson and the learning to benefit the lesson and to introduce the lesson objectives which was to learn ‘poly-harmonics’ and perform a piece using harmonies. As a result, the lesson started with minimal disruption and the other pupils took their seats and settled very quickly, all of them watching and listening to what was happening at the piano. The teacher’s response to this incident avoided a negative start to the lesson and resulted in the lesson starting with ease. However, a question can be raised as to whether pupil A was encouraged to act like an ethically, informed citizen (Donaldson, 2015) by breaking the rule of lining up outside the class and whether this fair on the other pupils who had followed the rules?

The teacher also used this incident to model the importance of practice to the other pupils by stating that “pupil A can play a piece like this because he practices, each and every one of you are also capable of this but you need to practice.” In doing so, the teacher addressed two of the purposes laid out by Donaldson; that all children and young people should be ambitious, capable learners and enterprising, creative contributors (Donaldson, 2015).

Literature Review

Traditionally, classroom management and learning has often been based on the well-established learning theory associated with the model of behaviourism. Here the student's behaviour and learning are managed and taught through the implementation of consequences (Garrett, 2008, p. 34). This behaviourist school of thought first developed as a result of research carried out by Ivan Pavlov in the early 20th century. Pavlov conducted a series of experiments in dogs, through which he first described the theory of classical conditioning. Pavlov's experiments were designed after he first observed the unconditioned response of saliva production in dogs when laboratory assistants entered the room. Pavlov determined that the dogs associated the entrance of the laboratory assistants with the arrival of food and therefore salivated as a response to the unconditioned stimulus. He gave this the term “associated learning”. Pavlov then showed that learning could also be achieved through conditioning. By pairing a conditioned stimulus with an unconditioned stimulus, Pavlov was able to show a form of learning which he gave the term classical conditioning. This theory of classical conditioning and associated learning later became the basis on which the behaviourist school of thought was established (Gray and MacBlain, 2012). However, the theory of classical conditioning suggested that the learner was passive in the learning process and was later critiqued by Thorndike and Skinner who both believed that learning was in fact an active process where an association is made between a behaviour and a consequence.

The work of Skinner (1953) resulted in the further development of the behaviourist school of thought where learning was now thought to occur via operant conditioning (Figure 2). Here correct and desirable behaviour is rewarded and positively reinforced whilst poor or undesirable behaviour is negatively reinforced and even punished (Payne, 2015, p. 484).

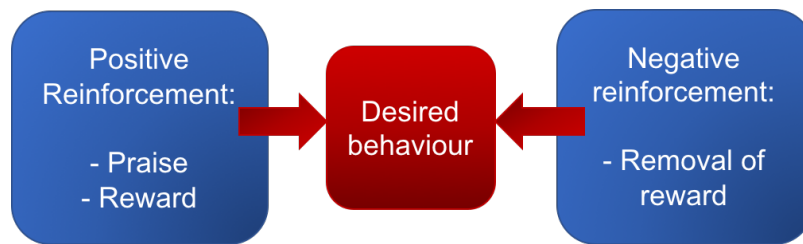


Figure 2: The use of positive and negative reinforcement to enhance desired behaviour

This is widely used today for behaviour and classroom management where positive reinforcement, often in the form of praise is used to strengthen a desired behaviour. Alternatively, negative reinforcement or punishment such as detention is used to prevent an undesirable behaviour from continuing (Gray and MacBlain, 2012). The behaviourist approach can almost always be seen in action on a school-wide basis through the enactment of school behavioural policies and the reinforcement of the school-wide expectations (Payne, 2015, p486). In School X, the behaviourist approach can clearly be seen through the implementation of the school ethos of being “*READY, RESPECTFUL and SAFE*”. If pupils begin to stray from these expectations, they are first reminded of the school ethos and asked if their behaviour is in line with the expectations. If the behaviour continues the pupils are then warned, with the potential consequence of detention should their behaviour continue and if the behaviour is still present after consistent negative reinforcement the student is punished through the means of detention (School X, 2019).

The influence of behaviourism can also be observed within the traditional, teacher-centred method of teaching by direct instruction (Figure 3) where the student is often solely seen as a knowledge receiver and the teacher as a knowledge transmitter (Garrett, 2008, p. 34 and Lee and Hannafin, 2016, p. 710). In this teacher-centred approach, learning is frequently performed through reinforcement of the concept through instruction, recitation, practice and often the motivation to learn and engage in the learning is influenced by the expectation of reward (Garrett, 2008, p. 36). However, this may leave little opportunity for the student to actively construct their own individual and meaningful connections to the concepts and therefore students may fail to transfer from surface learning to developing a deeper understanding of the material (Brouwer et al., 2019, p. 119).

Gaining a deeper understanding of the material being learnt is vital for developing the ability to transfer the knowledge to other areas of life and to allow for future, lifelong learning. Whereas the behaviourist approach to teaching may be necessary for classroom management and to ensure retention of certain material it may lead to students being over-reliant on the

teacher and therefore failing to develop as autonomous, capable learners (Reid, 2005). It is for these aforementioned reasons that the behaviourist approach to teaching has been challenged by the student-centred learning approach (Figure 3). The student-centred learning approach is based on the constructivist school of thought where the teacher takes more of a facilitator role and the students are placed directly at the centre of the learning experience (Marvell et al., 2013, p. 548).

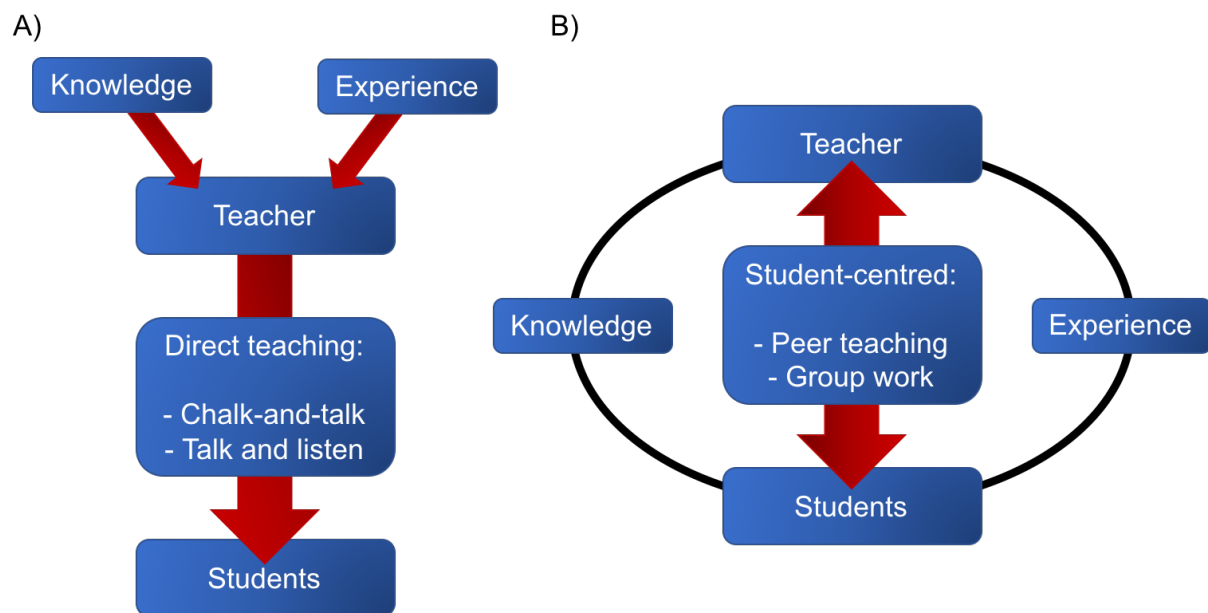


Figure 3: A schematic depiction of the differences between A) direct teaching and B) student-centred learning.

In this approach the students are responsible for their own learning and are allowed to develop and pursue their own learning opportunities according to their own individual goals (Lee and Hannafin, 2016, p. 708). This type of co-operative learning and teaching ensures that students are actively learning by enabling them to be free to explore, reflect and develop their own connections to the concepts being taught (Garrett, 2008, p. 36). This simultaneously takes into account the student's right and need to be heard, respected and supported (McCombs and Miller, 2007; UNICEF, No Date). As the name suggests the learner is the driver of the learning experience, leading to an increase in self-motivated learning (McCombs and Miller, 2007). In addition to this, self-motivated learning also enhances student ambition and self-confidence, falling in line with the four purposes of the new curriculum that were laid out by Prof. Donaldson in the Successful Futures document (Donaldson, 2015). This form of active learning also allows for students to experience real-life, non-linear learning, often realised through the means of peer teaching. Learning experiences such as these enables the students

to develop meaningful and memorable connections to the content (McCombs and Miller, 2007) by enabling the students to build on their own individual knowledge and experiences (Lee and Hannafin, 2016, p. 708).

Coe and Smyth (2010) have summarised student-centred learning as being dependent on interactive teaching and an interdependence between the individuals involved in the learning experience. A common misconception with this approach is that the teachers have no control over what is being taught, however in order for this teaching method to be successful the teacher must remain actively involved in the learning process. The teacher must strategically influence the student's learning by allowing for autonomy and authenticity whilst also providing support and structure for the students to follow. This is often in the form of modelling and scaffolding where the teacher demonstrates what to do and how to do it well by providing detailed instructions on how to succeed (Lee and Hannafin, 2016, p. 716). In order for a teacher to teach in a student-centred approach they must first understand that they themselves are also learners and must be willing to take a collaborative role with the students. This allows the teachers to model effective learning by providing the students with the tools to develop the knowledge and skills needed for lifelong learning whilst also being able to assume a leadership role when needed (McCombs and Miller, 2007). By taking a collaborative role with the students, teachers are also meeting one of the twelve pedagogical principles laid out by Prof. Donaldson that "good teaching and learning encourages collaboration" (Donaldson, 2015). For this to be successful teachers are required to be flexible in their approach to teaching, putting the student at the centre of the decision making and therefore being able to adapt and adjust their lessons according to the student's ability and needs (McCombs and Miller, 2007).

In reality meeting the needs of all students whether of high ability or low ability can be challenging to put into practice as each learner is vastly different (Reid, 2005), and so the importance of the student-teacher relationship must be considered. Student-teacher relationships are crucial to the success of learning and positive student-teacher relationships have been found to be highly influential on the motivation and engagement of the learner (Newberry, 2010, p. 1695; Engels et al., 2016, p. 1193). Positive student-teacher relationships are often based on the teacher knowing the student and their capabilities and their needs in order to encourage a supportive and caring environment where each student is treated fairly and with low levels of conflict. By knowing the students and developing positive student-teacher relationships, teachers are more easily able to adjust and adapt their teaching to allow for students to feel comfortable and confident and to develop the skills needed to become self-efficient and motivated learners (Porter, 2007). These relationships have also been shown to influence behaviour of the students, with positive student-teacher relationships contributing to

better student behaviour. On the other hand, negative-student relationships have been shown to result in higher levels of conflict between the student and the teacher and a decrease in the student's engagement with the learning (Engels et al., 2016, p. 1193). A conclusion can therefore be made that there needs to be a delicate balance between maintaining a positive relationship and ensuring that poor behaviour is not overlooked.

Effective teaching can therefore be said to consist of a continuum of teaching where multiple approaches work simultaneously (Donaldson, 2015). That said, implementing the behaviourist teaching model, student-centred learning model and positive student-teacher relationships are all vital to ensure the holistic development and learning of a student.

Reflection, Evaluation and next steps

One of the main challenges in implementing student-centred learning within a classroom is being able to create authentic, real-life situations where learning can occur. That said, the music teacher in School X was able to take advantage of the authentic situation created by the student in order to benefit the lesson and enhance the learning experience. Instead of delaying the start of the lesson to discipline pupil A, the teacher quickly adapted the structure of his lesson and by doing so the teacher was able to clearly model the lesson objectives and the importance of practice to the pupils. The teacher was able to avoid a negative start to the lesson where potential conflict could have arisen and instead transform the situation into a memorable and real-life learning experience that was student-driven (McCombs and Miller, 2007) and in which all the pupils were all fully engaged. This relied on the teacher's willingness to be flexible and adaptable and perhaps changing the planned teaching style from direct teaching into student-centred learning. Donaldson (2015) states that good teaching requires the teacher to utilise a blend of approaches in their teaching; the teacher's ability to adapt and the response of the pupils to the situation clearly showed this to be true. The teacher's response also suggested that the teacher had a positive relationship with the pupil and was aware of the pupil's capabilities as a musician. The teacher praised the pupil and immediately used the pupil to drive the learning by asking the pupil to continue playing. By reacting to the action of pupil A in this positive way, the teacher was also able to maintain a positive student-teacher relationship with the pupil by showing support and encouragement (Porter, 2007). Alternatively, the pupil may have felt discouraged and their love and excitement for the music lesson may have been weakened.

That said, positive student-teacher relationships also rely on fairness and equal treatment of all pupils within the class (Porter, 2007). Praising the pupil's disregard of the school-wide "*READY, RESPECTFUL and SAFE*" policy could potentially be considered unfair on the pupils who followed the rules and received no praise for doing so. It would be interesting to see if the outcome would be different had a different pupil entered the room without permission. Student-teacher relationships are also reliant on the presence of professional boundaries and the pupil should never be treated with bias or shown favouritism. This is also relevant when addressing a pupil's behaviour. According to Skinner's theory of operant behaviour (Skinner, 1953), positive reinforcement of behaviour causes behaviour to be strengthened and to continue. By positively reacting to pupil A's actions, the behaviour may have unintentionally been positively reinforced and may continue and even impact on the pupil's behaviour across the rest of the school, therefore, a question can be raised as to whether pupil A's behaviour should have been negatively reinforced? That is not to say that pupil A should've been punished but rather perhaps pupil A could have been quietly reminded of the school ethos and the consequences of not following the rules in order to negatively reinforce the behaviour. However, the teacher was able to quickly assess what was more important and vital for the lesson, whether to discipline pupil A immediately or to use the situation for the benefit for the lesson. In doing so, the teacher was able to effectively take advantage of a student-centred learning opportunity and to therefore enhance the learning whilst also following the pedagogical principle of creating authentic contexts for learning (Donaldson, 2015).

It is essential for all educational practitioners to part-take in critical reflection in order for them to further develop and inform their practice (Fook, 2015). It is for this reason that this observation and critical reflection was performed. Moving forward, the importance of using a blend of teaching approaches such as student-centred learning and direct teaching will influence the observer's practice. The observer will consider their need to be flexible in their approach to teaching, understanding that authentic, collaborative learning opportunities are vital for pupils to form memorable links to the content being studied (Donaldson, 2015; Welsh Government, 2017a). That said, the observer will also ensure that negative reinforcement is used when most appropriate in order to prevent undesired behaviour from continuing, even if not immediately. However, the observer will do this knowing that it is important to pick their battles, ensuring that the effectiveness of the learning experience is of primary concern.

Conclusion

To conclude, the professional standards and development of educational practitioners is highly reliant on the engagement of teachers with the critical reflection of their practice according to the literature, including both theory and current research. Through a teacher's engagement with reflective practice, critical evaluation and continuous professional learning, the teacher's practice may be adjusted and improved in order to ensure the effectiveness of the learning experiences for both the pupils and the teachers. It was for these reasons that this critical evaluation was performed and will subsequently be used to inform the observer's practice in accordance with the professional standards (Welsh Government, 2017b). The critical incident that has been discussed agrees with Donaldson's suggestion that effective teaching requires the use of a blend of approaches, creates authentic contexts and encourages collaboration which are all found in the twelve pedagogical principles. This particular critical incident showed the effectiveness of using a blend of approaches (Donaldson, 2015), through the use of both behaviourist methods in the form of positive reinforcement and student-centred learning methods in the form of peer teaching and collaborative learning. The critical incident also highlighted the importance of teacher flexibility and adaptability in implementing these different approaches of teaching since the learning that took place as a result of this event required the teacher to quickly adapt and adjust the lesson in order to benefit the learning. This indicated that a teacher should pick their battles in order to maintain a positive student-teacher relationship whilst simultaneously assessing whether not addressing the behaviour would be beneficial or detrimental to the learning of the individual and also the entire class. In this case the behaviour actually benefited the learning experience of every individual. However, by addressing the behaviour post learning experience the teacher could potential mitigate any further issues. Following the observation and reflection of this critical incident a more holistic understanding of good practice has been achieved and this new awareness will be used to improve future practice.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Observation / Field notes



Yr Athrofa
Addysg a'r Dyniaethau
Education and Humanities

OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date: 26-Sep-2019 @09:00
Lesson details: 1st Lesson Year 7, English. Once fortnightly lesson to focus on literacy + spelling. ~22 pupils, mixed ability, 2 ALN focus on spelling, nouns and verbs.
Classroom culture (Are the students focused on learning?) Students generally focused on learning. Almost all are always doing the work, one pupil slightly distracted and one pupil sick. All participating in answering questions, marking each others work and completing tasks.
Objectives (Is there a clear purpose to the lesson? How do the lesson activities promote that purpose?) Clear purpose to the lesson. Spelling, nouns and verbs. Teacher uses words from up coming assessment for spelling examples. - Spelling tests to start Writing task → write out sentences → highlight verb and noun.
Direction (Are the students clear about what they are doing and how to do it well?) - All students appear to be on task and completing tasks / questions at teachers request. - One student slower to understand task but soon gets on task after further explanation. - If student mishears word for spelling they simply ask and teacher repeats.
Access and challenge (Are all students able to engage in the lesson? Are all students challenged?) All students challenged. Teacher forms question differently according to ability i.e. how do you spell 'noun' if lower ability child move on, if higher ask, what is a 'noun'. One ALN student unable to keep up at times e.g. when writing out sentences. Teacher asks pupil sitting next to him to help him. Teacher allows child to take photos of board to write out later.



Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

Yr Athrofa
Addysg a'r Dyniaethau
Education and Humanities

Assessment

How does the teacher assess student understanding before, during and after the lesson? How is this used in their teaching?

Teacher uses a spelling test. Asks peers to mark each others in purple pen - rewrite the correct spelling ^{5 times} if wrong. Reminds the need for correct marking. Teachers asks individuals to spell out the word and writes on the board. If got 10/10 asked to raise hand and given a green point on class charts. Raising hands also to check if there was an improvement from the last test.

Teacher places 6 sentences on board ask pupils to copy out the sentences. She then models first sentence by asking class what words are nouns and what are verbs. Highlighting each in different colour. Ask students to complete remaining 5. Then by question and answer checks progress. Teacher also walks round during tasks checking progress.

Specifics / Critical Incidents

Are there particular telling moments and examples which it would be helpful to discuss?

Teacher reiterates to make sure you mark each others work honestly + correctly even if marking your friends → what is the risk of peer marking? Is it useful?

One child not completely engaged → Teacher calls on them for answer.

Class charts → Positive and negative points → Beneficial?

Child gets up goes to teacher says he doesn't feel well → Teacher asks if he might be sick → Child says yes → Teacher allows him to leave with TA → later child returns and gets ~~more~~ involved → is child really unwell / avoiding work → what's the affect of allowing child to miss lots of the lesson.

Child A who has ALN is struggling to keep up, teacher asks child B to help child A. Child A ~~try~~ tries to simply copy child B and Child B hides work. Child A says "aren't we supposed to work together?" Child B then says, "yes but you can't just copy, you need to at least try first."



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OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date:	26-Sep-2019 @ 10:00
Lesson details:	Year 7. 2nd lesson. ICT ~22 pupils. Mixed ability. 2 ALN Focus on MS. word function, making table, adding headers+ footers and simple formatting. Assessing pupils levels within the class.
Classroom culture (Are the students focused on learning?)	Children not focused at start. Pupils in a computer lab therefore backs to teacher. Starter is to log onto the computer. Children log on and open up internet. Once the students started ~~on~~ tasks they became more focused however a group of students sitting next to each other were on and off task.
Objectives (Is there a clear purpose to the lesson? How do the lesson activities promote that purpose?)	Clear purpose, students were to use MS. Word to copy the timetables from planners to a table in a document, save document and print a copy for teacher to mark. By end of session students should be able to use word and make a table.
Direction (Are the students clear about what they are doing and how to do it well?)	Students are clear about the task however need further guidance of how to do it as the teacher is walking around.
Access and challenge (Are all students able to engage in the lesson? Are all students challenged?)	Some students found the task far easier than others some students took the entire lesson to complete one black and white timetable. Others completed both week 1 and week 2, formatted, added a picture from the internet and added word art as an extension. Teacher always had an extra task for those more able. Big range of digital competence in the class.



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Assessment

How does the teacher assess student understanding before, during and after the lesson? How is this used in their teaching?

Teacher walks around class to check progress.

According to progress teacher gives aid where needed or more tasks where required.

Teacher collects printed work at end and will mark and return it.

Specifics / Critical Incidents

Are there particular telling moments and examples which it would be helpful to discuss?

Teacher has to use a louder voice → Big room → Children's backs to teacher.

Teacher constantly walking around → Positive reinforcement
Teaching/fixing misconceptions

Group of girls sitting together talking and not making same progress as others in the class → No seating plan in place
→ should there be? → Teacher awaiting to know students' better?

Boy packs bag early and goes to leave as he has finished all tasks → Teacher asks where he is going, asks him to sit down and gives boy another task.

Large range of ICT competency within the class → Differentiation?
→ Teacher using task to place their competency.



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OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date: 26-Sep-2019 @ 11:20
Lesson details: 3rd lesson. Year 7, DT (Textiles) ~16 pupils. Mixed ability. Lesson to begin the process of designing their project for the year a 'fabric monster'. Mindmapping design ideas.
Classroom culture (Are the students focused on learning?) Majority of students are focused. One table of three boys very disruptive, throwing things shouting out. Students also asking 'Miss, do you know...? He's my cousin etc. Students on task at times such as during group work.
Objectives (Is there a clear purpose to the lesson? How do the lesson activities promote that purpose?) Purpose is clear. Firstly a starter is used to reiterate health + safety rules. Then teacher models a mindmap with students around table contributing. Students then work well in groups to complete mindmaps then take ideas from group mindmaps to produce their own.
Direction (Are the students clear about what they are doing and how to do it well?) Students appear to be clear what the task is as teacher models the task with students surrounding her. Teacher asks students to contribute to the task by giving ideas to add to the mind map. Teacher reiterates the need to write the right way up to be able to read as a poster. All students comply. When moving to individual task teacher uses a previous pupils work to model what to do and what not to do.
Access and challenge (Are all students able to engage in the lesson? Are all students challenged?) All students are able to engage in the lesson. All contributed to mindmapping task when the teacher modelled it. Pupils all discussing and involved in developing the mind map in groups. Pupils a little less on task during individual mind mapping many pupils drawing the 'monster' even when directed a second time to draw a mind map.



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Assessment

How does the teacher assess student understanding before, during and after the lesson? How is this used in their teaching?

Teacher used a starter which was a picture containing hazards and asked pupils to call out hazards. Teacher requested 5 before moving forward. This was used to confirm students knowledge from last week.

Teacher modelled the task as a class (all gathered round) having students contribute to the modelling to ensure students understood the task.

Teacher constantly walking around tables to check on progress of the students throughout the lesson.

Specifics / Critical Incidents

Are there particular telling moments and examples which it would be helpful to discuss?

- 3 boys misbehaving → No seating plan → Allowing for autonomy
→ Teacher says in DT the student is required to be creative perhaps working with friends will help this? → Teacher will move if not working.
- Pupil asks miss do you know my brother → Another pupil asks and another → Avoiding work / Need for attention?
- Boy at misbehaving table asks of his own accord to be moved. After moving boy works better.
- Teacher threatens the official warning system to a boy who is consistently misbehaving → Student apologises → teacher continues with point then re-visits student, asks how he's getting on → teacher says excellent well done → Positive reinforcement?
- Teacher deals with pupils who were not on task by calling all students who were finished up for group task → Rest left to continue work for a period of time before teacher calls everyone up.



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OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date: 26-Sep-2019 @ 12:20
Lesson details: 4th Lesson Year 7, Music, ~22 pupils. Mixed ability. Polyharmonics - students singing in Polyharmonics followed by triads on the piano/keyboard. Students split between multiple rooms. Classroom culture (Are the students focused on learning?) Students all engaged for the most part all actively involved in singing the majority of the time. One student pulling faces but this is very quickly addressed. ~~Students~~ Students then split off into separate rooms to practice triads. Students now playing alternatives to triads and are therefore not on task that was set. Objectives (Is there a clear purpose to the lesson? How do the lesson activities promote that purpose?) Clear purpose of learning polyharmonics and triads. Students shown video to highlight what polyharmonics are from previous years then attempt singing themselves. Students shown how to play triads on piano then sent to practice. Direction (Are the students clear about what they are doing and how to do it well?) Students are clear regarding the polyharmonics they do it correctly right away. Students watched 4 videos of previous year groups to help with this. Students less clear with the triads as hard to demonstrate to 22 per student triads on one piano. Teacher walks around to explain on a more individual basis once split. Access and challenge (Are all students able to engage in the lesson? Are all students challenged?) All students able to engage. All students were singing and dancing during polyharmonics lesson activity. All students given a keyboard/piano each to practice triads. Some students struggled to play triads and because all students were spread out it was difficult for the teacher to help everyone. Teacher uses a MAT pupil to help others as the task was not challenging enough for the MAT pupil.

One ~~per~~ student says they feel sick and is disengaged to start but progressively becomes more engaged.



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Assessment

How does the teacher assess student understanding before, during and after the lesson? How is this used in their teaching?

Teacher asks students who knows what a polyharmonic is? Teacher explains in detail (with singing examples) what a polyharmonic is. Teacher then shows 4 videos of previous year groups singing to explain further. Teacher tests understanding by asking students what a polyharmonic is again and asking students to gather around piano to sing. Tests understanding by singing.

Teacher demonstrates triads on piano using famous song ~~that~~ students know.

Asks children to show they understand hand position by holding up hand in the position.

Teacher then splits up class and walks between rooms correcting misconceptions whilst practicing.

Specifics / Critical Incidents

Are there particular telling moments and examples which it would be helpful to discuss?

- Student enters room before teacher arrives → other students say he is not allowed → Student playing piano really well → teacher arrives allows other students in and instead of telling the student off the teacher sits at piano and starts playing the harmony to the song → Praised him for practicing encourages other students to practice and uses the song to introduce polyharmonics to the class.
- ~~Students~~ Students sitting around teacher not at a desk → No seating plan
- one student ill → two → three... → Teacher gives options head on desk / not get involved / go to pastoral → student who was ill continued with lesson → Got involved → singing + dancing.
- when messing around teacher threatens book work.
- Students become very hyper before splitting to use keyboards → teacher has them sit and breathe in and out on his count and explains importance of breathing slowly to stay calm.

Appendix 2: ARCs of critical incidents based on the observation field notes (appendix 1)



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Model Beirniad Wedi Adfyfyrio (BWA) Assisted Reflective Conclusions (ARC) Model

Dyddiad/Date: 26-Sep-2019

Digwyddiad critigol (Ffocws)/Critical incident (focus): Child A who has ALN is struggling to keep up. Teacher asks child B to help child A. Child B doesn't help in the way child A expects.

Profiad/ Experience	
Teimladau/ Feelings Beth yw eich teimladau ynghylch y profiad? "What are your feelings regarding the experience?"	This was a good way to help child A as child B was ahead. However it ended up adding confusion for child A. There wasn't clear directions /instruction for both child A and child B of what help in this context meant. How much help was child B supposed to give?
Cofio a Deall/ Remember and Understand "Allwch chi restru elfennau'r achos yng nghyd-destun y dysgu?" "Can you list the aspects of the incident in the context of learning?"	Would copying child B actually help child A to understand what they were doing. Would child A actually learn and understand the concepts of nouns and verbs. This would be useful if child B was able to explain and work through the problems with child A. However child A and B both misunderstood the instruction.
Gwerthuso a dadansoddi/ Evaluate and analyse "Beth y gellid ei gadw yr un fath i sicrhau addysgu a dysgu effeithiol yn y dyfodol?" "What could be kept the same to ensure effective teaching and learning in the future?"	The teacher could be more specific in their instruction and ask child B to work through the examples alongside child A. Or work through the problem together. Teacher could ensure that child B is comfortable in working/helping child A by revisiting the issue later in the lesson.
Casgliadau a chymau gweithredu/ Conclusions and actions "Beth yw eich atebion posibl i'r mater a nodwyd?" "Beth y gellid ei wneud nesaf?" "What are your possible solutions to the issue identified?" "What could be done next?"	The teacher could provide resources for child A to help speed up the writing process i.e. the sentences already printed therefore child A will simply have to highlight nouns and verbs to ensure learning objectives are met.
Y profiad newydd / Transformed experience	

Model Beirniad Wedi Adfyfyrio (BWA) Assisted Reflective Conclusions (ARC) Model

Dyddiad/Date: 26-Sep-2019

Digwyddiad critigol (Ffocws)/Critical incident (focus): Students backs to teachers, students miss teacher's next instruction due to being distracted by computers

Profiad/ Experience	
Teimladau/ Feelings Beth yw eich teimladau ynghylch y profiad? "What are your feelings regarding the experience?"	Students disconnected from the teacher and therefore learning. Teacher has to be more active and use a raised voice to grasp attention. Students distracted by computers in front of them. Lots of discussion between students, potential lack of focus.
Cofio a Deall/ Remember and Understand Allwch chi restru elfennau'r achos yng nghyd-destun y dysgu? "Can you list the aspects of the incident in the context of learning?"	Students not always on task or have failed to keep up / move on due to missing instructions. Learning is happening on more of an individual basis as teacher is repeating / moving round helping students individually with next steps.
Gwerthuso a dadansoddi/ Evaluate and analyse Beth y gallid ei gadw yr un fath i sicrhau addysgu a dysgu effeithiol yn y dyfodol? "What could be kept the same to ensure effective teaching and learning in the future?"	Teacher movement around the class was beneficial due to mixed ability of the students. Perhaps learning on a more individual basis / pace is required here due to mixed ability.
Casgliadau a chymau gweithredu/ Conclusions and actions Beth yw eich atebion posibl i'r mater a nodwyd? Beth y gallid ei wneud nesaf? "What are your possible solutions to the issue identified?" "What could be done next?"	Enforce a rule of switching screens off when teacher is demonstrating? Turning chairs around when teacher is giving instructions?
Y profiad newydd / Transformed experience	

Model Beirniad Wedi Adfyfyrio (BWA) Assisted Reflective Conclusions (ARC) Model

Dyddiad/Date: 26-Sep-2019

Digwyddiad critigol (Ffocws)/Critical Incident (focus): Modelling work as class, moving to group work to then moving onto individual work.

Profiad/ Experience	
Teimladau/ Feelings Beth yw eich teimladau ynghylch y profiad? "What are your feelings regarding the experience?"	All children engaged in the task, however some groups ^{not working well} . Collaborative effort to create a product as a class which each individual can take something from. Learners were excited and engaged at all stages of the tasks whether as a class or individual.
Cofio a Deall/ Remember and Understand "Allwch chi restru elfennau'r achos yng nghyd-destun y dysgu?" "Can you list the aspects of the incident in the context of learning?"	~~Get~~ Collaborative learning was vital to this task where students called ideas or contributed by writing ideas on a shared sheet. Creativity was encouraged by allowing students to draw or write. Questioning was used to ensure students understood each task.
Gwerthuso a dadansoddi/ Evaluate and analyse "Beth y gellid ei gadw yr un fath i sicrhau addysgu a dysgu effeithiol yn y dyfodol?" "What could be kept the same to ensure effective teaching and learning in the future?"	Collaborative learning to create one product as a class was beneficial. Students saw other students ideas and agreed and built upon to build own ideas to take away for individual learning. Modelling as a class worked well to determine expectations.
Casgliadau a chymau gweithredu/ Conclusions and actions "Beth yw eich atebion posibl i'r mater a nodwyd?" "Beth y gellid ei wneud nesaf?" "What are your possible solutions to the issue identified?" "What could be done next?"	Challenges of all accessing the sheet in one go. Perhaps making groups smaller or larger paper will be beneficial. Some groups worked better than others. Perhaps setting groups to work in could be beneficial to separate those who don't work well together.
Y profiad newydd / Transformed experience	

Model Beirniad Wedi Adfyfyrio (BWA) Assisted Reflective Conclusions (ARC) Model

Dyddiad/Date: 26-Sep-2019

Digwyddiad critigol (Ffocws)/Critical incident (focus): Student enters the room and plays piano before instructed. Teacher does not discipline but uses this to model the lesson aims

Profiad/ Experience	
Teimladau/ Feelings Beth yw eich teimladau ynghylch y profiad? "What are your feelings regarding the experience?"	Encouraged that the student loved music that much and was excited for the lesson and to play the piano. Was this fair on the pupils who had waited outside as required? The students responded well to the teacher playing the harmony to the piece the boy was playing and it seemingly fit into the lesson.
Cofio a Deall/ Remember and Understand "Allwch chi restru elfennau'r achos yng nghyd-destun y dysgu?" "Can you list the aspects of the incident in the context of learning?"	The teacher used this incident to reinforce the importance of practice to the rest of the class. Modelling was used as the lesson was poly-harmonics therefore the teacher playing the harmony and explaining whilst playing introduced the concept to the students. Teacher positively reacts to students action and encourages the student by doing so.
Gwerthuso a dadansoddi/ Evaluate and analyse "Beth y gellid ei gadw yr un fath i sicrhau addysgu a dysgu effeithiol ym y dyfodol?" "What could be kept the same to ensure effective teaching and learning in the future?"	The use of modelling was well placed, playing harmonies whilst introducing the lesson was effective rather than spending time disciplining the student and perhaps discouraging the student. Positive reinforcement of the importance of practice in learning was effective. Students were engaged listening to them play.
Casgliadau a chymau gweithredu/ Conclusions and actions "Beth yw eich atebion posibl i'r mater a nodwyd?" "Beth y gellid ei wneud nesaf?" "What are your possible solutions to the issue identified?" "What could be done next?"	Perhaps the other students felt it was unfair that they waited outside as required but ^{the} student who entered got praised for not adhering to the school rules. Should the teacher have visited the issue? Requirement for differentiation for this student who is more able.
Y profiad newydd / Transformed experience	