



Skills for life: employability and future pathways

By Lauryn Griffiths

Introduction

- Discuss the job description and why I am interested in the job role.
- Talk about my experience and why I think I'll be good at being a primary school teacher.
- Describe the values the school I am applying for holds and how I can help the school maintain and achieve them.
- The skills I will be exploring will be teamwork, creative thinking and the importance of reflection to develop my practice.
- Mention Schön's reflective cycle.
- Explain how the skills for life: Employability and future pathways module has given me a wider understanding and the help to be a good candidate for any job.

The Job Description

- According to Blackburn Council (2019) Wensley Fold Primary School are looking for an energetic and enthusiastic early years foundation phase teacher to join their committed and hardworking team.
- The right candidate should be able to:
 - Enjoy working with and sharing their knowledge with others.
 - Be a creative and innovative thinker, who can communicate effectively.
 - Commit to develop the whole child.
 - “Provide engaging learning experiences that inspire and support children to become lifelong, independent learners”.
 - Be reflective and keen to develop their practice.
 - Prepared to go above and beyond to achieve the best for their children (Blackburn Council, 2019).

My experience

- I'm interested in this job role as I've always wanted to work with children and feel like I have the right skills, experience, qualifications and knowledge.
- Undertaken a childcare diploma where I experienced eight hundred hours of working in a school with various age groups.
- Primary education degree which extends my knowledge on working with children every day.
- Currently working part time in a day nursery.
- I have undertook a level three paediatric first aid course.

Values of the school

- “Aim to develop a happy, cheerful and caring atmosphere for all who work in the school” (Wensley Fold, 2019).
- They offer an environment where every child is encouraged to achieve their full potential in all aspects of school life (Wensley Fold, 2019). According to Pollard (2014) for children to achieve their full potential the main goal of teaching and learning should be the promotion of the learner’s independence.
- Have a strong value for equality and Coleman and Earley (2005) emphasise the fact that equality is central in education and for children to have all their needs met there needs to be equality.
- “The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people” (Wensley Fold, 2019).
- Knowing the impact I will have on children and young people’s lives being a teacher at the school it is important that I:
 - Meet and Maintain the schools values.
 - Do not let my own opinions, values and beliefs get in the way and Pollard (2013) adds to this and says that it is important to be aware on how our own values are transmitted.

Teamwork

- According to Stacey (2009) teamwork is a crucial skill to have within a workplace and it allows us to share our knowledge around the workplace and advance our skills.
- In order to be a good team player, it is important to have good communication skills to give a good understanding and to be effective in the process (Coleman and Earley, 2005).
- I feel like I would be a good team worker as I am able to balance multiple viewpoints, a good listener and well mannered.
- Burns (2001) says that good listening skills is important to be an effective team player and to also be accommodating and social.
- Teamwork also gives us the opportunity to form relationships within the staff group and the process makes us more confident individuals (Bush and Middlewood, 2005).
- Tarrant (2013) mentions that relationships are more likely to form when team workers are committed to each other and treat each other as equals. Stacey (2009) agrees with Tarrant (2013) and adds that teamwork is a shared responsibility where you need to have open and honest communication and to have a commitment of working through the issues.
- Tarrant (2013, P.8) quotes that “fellow teachers are the most valuable source of professional development”.
- From my experience of working in a nursery, teamwork has made a variety of situations easier for me.

Creative Thinking

- According to John (2007) a creative thinker needs to be adventurous and open minded.
- Nitaya (2019) suggests that creative thinking is where your able to establish and develop ideas, use your imagination and to look for results.
- I feel that I'm a creative thinker because I'm always thinking of new ideas and asking why and why not in different situations.
- Siburian (2019) states that creative thinking is being able to come up with a new situation when the original does not go to plan. Erdem (2019) agrees with Siburian (2019) and mentions that creative thinking is being able to think outside the box.
- When on placement in a primary school creative thinking helped me when I planned an activity for a group of children.

Reflective Thinking

- According to Tarrant (2013) through reflecting we become more aware, more in control and more able to see our strengths and areas where we need to develop.
- Tarrant (2013, P.2) quotes that “from reflecting we begin to move from novice to expert”.
- Schön’s reflective model has helped me to reflect and develop my practice.
- Schön’s (2016) suggests that there is a period of reflection before the situation, then reflection as the action is taking place as questions are being asked throughout and then Schön says that it is later we look back and reflect.
- Donald Schön’s (2016, P.2) suggested that “the capacity to reflect on action is to engage in the process of continuous learning and this this is one of the defining characteristics of professional practice”.
- I am able reflect by being able to adapt to change and see where attitudes and approaches must adapt and develop.
- Thompson and Thompson (2018) go on to mention that being reflective allows us to have a greater sense of control making us less prone to stress, a higher level of confidence and it gives us a continuous professional development.

Conclusion

Throughout this presentation I have learnt:

- The importance of developing and having the skills that a job requires within its job description.
- How to maintain a jobs values by not letting my own opinions and beliefs get in the way and focussing on the benefits of the values on children's and young people's lives.
- That teamwork, creative thinking and reflective thinking are three main skills to have within a work setting.
- Teamwork allows us to be able to get tasks done easier by sharing our knowledge and advancing our skills.
- Creative thinking helps us to be able to handle any problems that arise by being able to look at situations from different perspectives.
- Reflective thinking helps us to develop our practice by being aware of our strengths and weaknesses.
- Schön's reflective cycle helps us to reflect throughout any situation by making us think about what we need to improve on.
- I feel like the skills for life: employability and future pathways module has helped me to become more employable by showing me how to reflect on situations, what not to do in the workplace, how to be professional and what skills I need to develop in order to be successful.

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