

The importance of reflective practice as a professional practitioner Katy Jenkins

What is reflection and reflective practice?

According to (HCPC, 2023), reflection is an action that aids the process of thinking analytically about your actions. their work ethic all the time for the benefit of themselves and the children that they are responsible for. According to (pacey, in your professional practice and to develop your skills further. By thinking back on your week or day of how you Have done and what mistakes that you have made. you can then assess how you can better yourself and develop Yourself in a positive way for the future. According to (University of Cambridge, 2023) reflective practice is an Opportunity to reflect and to think about everything that could be improved on and how we can be better for next Time. Furthermore, it is also a way to reflect on the things that we have done well. According to Schon (quoted in Aubrey And Riley,2019, p.181) There is reflection in practice and reflection on practice. According to (open library, 2023) Reflecting In practice is reflecting while something is already happening and must decide how to act, consider the situation and act immediately. Furthermore, reflecting on practice means reflecting after something happens, they must reconsider the situation and really think about what needs to be changed in the future for a better outcome Schon's theory is a very useful theory to reflect on for a practitioner and very useful to use in practice, practitioners will need to carry out reflection During practice to better their knowledge their future planning and can make informed Decisions.

discussions with their co-workers to help process the events of the week or the day, this is essential for progress, development.

Reflection within professional practice

As practitioners it is their responsibility to improve their skill and learn new lessons, and can then be applied anytime

2023) as a practitioner reflection should be a continuous cycle of reflection to keep the practitioners' standards high. Furthermore, it is also a process of thinking and analysing a practitioner's every day actions. By using this method practitioners are able to see both their strengths and weaknesses, and by assessing that, are then able to know where to improve and to also gain confidence of where they do their best work. Furthermore, it forces the practitioner to analyse why they do a certain way of working and makes the practitioner figure out which method of working are best. Adding onto that, pedagogy is formed from reflecting and processing your mistakes and your strengths according to (Early education, 2023).

It is vitally important for practitioners to have collaborative

Reflection within the early years setting.

One vital aspect of reflection within an early year's setting is having useful and informative conversations. As stated in (teach early years, 2023), this is a route where it is always readily available. A practitioner can talk to parents, colleagues or other professionals and reflect and discuss about anything they wish on their day or their week that's just gone. Furthermore, it is also important to schedule regular meetings for staff to be able to go over anything they wish about their work ethic or other colleagues work development, this way, it is easier to get a better all-round picture of everyone's skills and development, but to also highlight any areas they may need improvement on. In addition, by adding onto a practitioner's development and learning the practitioner may use these new skills in their day-to-day work activities and applying this knowledge to their job. They may also use their new found knowledge to help and aid their colleagues in developing aswell, doing the reflection this way, practitioners can use their work team to help each other in being the best childcare professionals they can be, and be able to aid and uplift each other as a team. According to (study prism, 2023) reflection aids practitioners in finding out who they are and how they work and relate to other workers. However, this can become quite hard because they work with children that's why it is very important to discuss things with your colleagues. Children may not know fully how to verbalize exactly what they want and need. Furthermore, by reflecting with your colleagues and professionals it creates a deeper bond and a solid foundation for you and your colleagues which creates friendships and trust between teams. Reflection doesn't just involve professional practitioners it also involves the parents and how they can reflect on their child and on home life, can reflect on how things can change and improve from their end.

Models and theories of reflection

There are many models that can be used in doing reflection, the most well known model is the Gibbs reflective cycle. According to (the university of Edinburgh, 2023) The Gibbs reflective cycle offers a well-designed and detailed framework for reflecting on your experiences in the workplace, it aids practitioners to improve on things that didn't go well, or highlights experiences that went well, the cycle includes description, feelings, evaluation, analysis, conclusion and then the action plan.

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/glowblogs/uodsseportfolio/files/2015/10/gibbs-reflective-cycle.jpg>



By using these stages as an aid especially on repeated experiences, it will give the practitioner a framework and good stages to follow and analyse for future use and can be used frequently and be used in many different scenarios. Another brilliant model that is used in reflection is Kolb's reflection cycle, according to (simply psychology, 2023) this framework works in two ways, a four stage cycle of learning and four separate learning styles, so this model is very detailed and could be hard to follow. Kolb believes that in a range of situations, the involvement of abstract concepts can happen in many situations and it can be applied flexibly. Kolb has said to have made the four stage cycle to be able to 'touch all bases'. The four stages are active experimentation, concrete experience, reflective observation, and abstract conceptualisation. Kolb's theory is that learning is an integrated process, as each stage of this cycle feeds into the next part of the cycle, the whole cycle is very well connected and flows well into each other. Kolb believed that there were two main choices that practitioners make in practice, and that practitioners cannot do those decisions at the same time which is to think and to feel, the basis of how you do your practice is based off of what your choice is. Being able to tell which choice you and your colleagues decide to act on will enable practitioners to orient learning to the preferred method which will then produce the best outcome for the practitioner and then ultimately, the

child.

Schon's theory as mentioned earlier, is the reflection in action and reflection on action. As mentioned before, it is a reflection clearly distinct from during the event and then reflection on what happened after the event. This is vitally important and useful for practitioners because it is a great theory to use quickly and for thinking on your feet and to try if things are not going how a practitioner would've wanted or if something unexpected happened. There are both pros and cons to these models, It is said that Gibbs's model is very reliable and a good framework to follow, it is the most well known model. According to (NHS England, 2023), Gibbs's theory has been used with success within a healthcare sector and beyond, however it has been said to be too structured as it has been reduced to steps, a lot of people have said this is too formulaic. Furthermore, many believe that this model gives useful steps on how to use reflected practice accordingly however it has been debated that a broader and a more reflexive approach would be better in the long run. Furthermore, many people do not believe that reflective models such as the ones above are the best way to do them as they only show that it is only beneficial for practitioners if reflection is reduced to steps. It is vitally important that childcare practitioners also use their intuition when it comes to children and using reflective models won't always help practitioners with this, Although it does give a good step by step guide in what to cover in reflective practice it does not know exactly what the practitioner has experienced in a particular moment, that is when colleagues and other professionals would definitely become more useful in that situation. Models like the ones mentioned are very good to read over and for a basis to start off with.

In conclusion, Using reflective practice through these models is extremely important and useful and is the most reliable way to aid a practitioner on starting their reflection. Being able to develop their reflection skills as a practitioner is extremely important as it aids in the development of their skills while working with children. Reflection not only helps the practitioner but it also helps further understand the children and their wants and needs and what stage of development they are currently at whilst under the practitioner's care. Reflective practice connects all the needs of the child and the practitioner as it helps make it a lot easier to future plan for the needs of the child, through reflective practice practitioners are able to fully understand what is needed to be done to improve the development of both the practitioner and then ultimately, the child.

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