

Part One-Introduction**Part Two-Quality First(NDNA)****Part Three-Early Years Wales Quality for All****Part Four-Conclusion****Part Five-Reference List****Part One-Introduction.**

For this assignment , I am going to critically reflect two source methods of promoting and ensuring quality in early years settings meet the statutory requirements . Both organisations that have been chosen , play a vital role in the succession of early years settings particularly in Wales. For this assignment the organisations that have been chosen , I strongly believe play a critical role in the succession of early years settings. Gibbs(1988) believed that critical reflection in the early years is that of a structured cycle , in which moves beyond a simple description of events to an evaluation of feelings as well as an analysis of practice . This then ultimately allows practitioners to create an action plan for future development.

Part Two-Quality First(NDNA).

The National Day Nurseries Association was formally incorporated as a private limited company as well as a national charity in 1996. The association originated as a collective of nursery providers who joined together to share their ideas and best practices, which would eventually evolve into a major representative body for the private, voluntary and independent(PVI) nursery sectors across the United Kingdom. Whilst the association itself was established in 1996, its influential quality assurance pathway, which is originally known as Quality First was introduced in 2001, this provides a structured benchmark for excellence in early years setting.

The NDNA serves as a positive factor for early years settings , it provides a structured framework, that prioritises emotional security as the foundation of all learning. Using this approach links with John Bowlby's Attachment Theory(1969) which researched showed that children require a secure base , provided by a responsive and consistent care giver to ensure the children feel safe enough to explore their environment within their setting. The NDNA ensures that practitioners move beyond basic supervision , instead being able to form deep and meaningful connections John Bowlby identified as critical for socio-emotional development. This focus does not only reduce toxic stress for children but also creates a nurturing atmosphere in which the secure attachments will flourish, this then allows the direct enhancement of the child's long term resilience as well as the capacity of building future relationships.

The framework of the NDNA for the key person system is a practical application which links into the practical application of Mary Ainsworth's(1970) research into sensitive responsiveness. This implements the requirement of settings to assigning specific practitioners to each child, the NDNA then ensures that there is a primary caregiver who can accurately perceive and interpret the child's emotional needs and wants , in which the practitioner can respond appropriately. this method links to Mary Ainsworth's(1970) strange situations theory, which demonstrated that a child's ability to use a caregiver as a secure base for exploration , depends entirely on the consistency and quality of these early interactions. Within the Quality Counts standards, the NDNA promotes the attunement of helping practitioners move beyond basic supervision and instead create the secure attachments patterns that Ainsworth(1970) identified as an essential key for a child's long term emotional regulation and social competence.

The Quality First framework (2001) which has now evolved into NDNA Quality Counts(2010) is a vital framework to the early years settings, this is because it provides a structured road map which allows for the movement beyond basic statutory compliance towards pedagogy excellence. Using this framework allows the establishment of a rigorous cycle of self evaluation and critical reflection. The framework ensures that the quality is used as an active daily practice rather than a static achievement . Using this process is essential for the identification of any gaps in provision, enhancing staff professional development , and ensuring that the learning environment remains responsive to the unique needs of every child.

The National Day Nursery Association(NDNA) recognises that practitioners wellbeing a fundamental policy , as an adults emotional state directly shapes the developmental and overall genetic health of the children . According to Elfer at el.(2011) the key person must be emotionally ready and able to form secure attachments which are necessary for children's mental health , if a practitioner is showing signs of stress or negative behaviours, they cannot provide the adequate care needed for the children in early years settings . News reports from the Anna Freud Centre(2021) highlighted that 74% of professionals reported above average stress levels , which often leads to the creation of a ripple effect, in which high staff tension unintentionally hinders children's ability to self regulate and being able to build empathy. However , The NDNA research into childhood epigenetics suggests that a practitioners positive mindset can allow the ability of switching on the genetic patterns in a child that can foster lifelong resilience , this proves that making staff wellbeing an essential investment provides a positive element for the long term development of the children in early years settings.

The National Day Nursery Association(NDNA) also plays a critical role in working together with the curriculum of Wales , as it works as a strategic partner within the Welsh government and provides early years settings with the essential implantation support. Through the NDNA Cymru , this organisation provides wales specific resources, which include in the moment planning factsheets, policy templates and

also the opportunity of practitioners to access specialized training courses such as Maths in Early Years Wales(2023). By the NDNA providing these tools , practitioners can effectively design their own curricula based around the local community and belonging , whilst still meeting the legal requirements of the Curriculum and Assessment Wales Act(2021).

The NDNA works between early years settings and the Welsh Government , primarily focusing on keeping early years settings financially stable and ensuring parent are offered all the financial support they are entitled to . The childcare offer Wales(N.D) provides eligible working parents of three and four year olds with up to 30 hours combined childcare per week , this offer is funded by the Welsh government to help reduce the stress of childcare fees .

Part Three-Early Years Wales Quality for All.

The Quality for All(QfA 2014) award is a significant quality assurance framework that over the decades has evolved to become a cornerstone of earl years excellence in Wales. It was originally rooted into the foundational work of the Wales Pre School Playgroups Association(Wales PPA 1987), this scheme was significantly updated and relaunched in September 2019, to align with the modern reflective practices and national standards(Early Years Wales,2019). Its role is vital in providing maintenance of their care standards as well as promoting and preserving the Welsh language and culture within the early years settings.

The Quality Cymraeg Assessment(N.D) is a specialised component of the Quality for All(QfA) framework which is designed to help early years settings develop their use of the Welsh language in their settings as well as being able to help early years settings evaluate ways they can use the Welsh language in their settings. This is a vital framework as it provides a structured pathway for practitioners regardless of their initial spoken language , this can allow practitioners to move from using incidental Welsh , which would be simple phrases, greetings or songs, progressing in practitioners being able to embed the language naturally throughout the day. This assessment also aligns with the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 strategy , ensuring that children in early years settings are given the best possible start in becoming bilingual from an early age. By prioritizing the language, early years settings foster an early sense of belonging and cultural identity, whilst allowing the Welsh speaking families to feel their heritage is respected and represented into their child's care environment. Mudiad Meithrin(2024) quote that by embedding the language in the early years , settings provide the natural confidence that children need at the start of their linguistic journey.

Linking to the QfA framework and the Welsh language, the Welsh Language Measure(2011) ensures that early years settings uphold the legal principle in that the Welsh language should be treated as equal as the English language . Using this

measure within early years settings allows the setting to establish a robust bilingual environment where children and families can access services through their choice of language . This measure is key in early years settings as it protects the linguistic rights of the child from the very start of their educational journey , ensuring that the Welsh language is offered as an active offer in their care. Furthermore, following the Welsh language measurement(2011) through the QfA accreditation helps early years settings to demonstrate high level compliance with national standards , which allows settings to prove that they are actively contributing to a bilingual Wales in where the language is a living , breathing part of every child's daily experience.

Early years settings in Wales using the QfA framework, are able to demonstrate high quality practice and ensure they are prepared for inspections from the Care Inspectorate Wales(CIW,2018). While CIW evaluates settings against the National Minimum Standards(NMS,2002) , the QfA scheme gives the settings the encouragement to move beyond basic compliance and more towards a model of excellence and continuous improvements(Early Years Wales,2024). Aligning the three core sections in early years which are Leadership, Learning and Wellbeing with the CIW inspection framework alongside the QfA , it allows for managers to generate the robust evidence needed for their annual Self Assessment of Service Statement(SASS) , without having the worries of duplicating work. Allowing settings to use this structured approach before the inspectors arrival, allows for the setting to provide documented proof that their setting is committed to providing the children's care , safety and professional development at a statutory level . Implementing the QfA framework before an inspection has a more positive outcome for an inspection and the likelihood of achieving high marks are more achievable.

Research also shows that The Reggio Emilia Approach(1940) and the QfA Wales framework are fundamentally linked by their shared commitment to high quality , child centred early years practice. The QfA Wales follows the principle of Reggio's belief that early years practitioners are researchers who use documentation to guide future experiences. This also follows the QfA's focus on the holistic approach to learning and play, which then mirrors the Reggio concept of hundred languages by observing children's diverse way of expressing emotions. Both frameworks also empathise the early years setting as a third teacher , and also the vital role of community and parental partnership. This is to ensure Wales provides stimulating, inclusive and meaningful contexts for every child to ensure they reach their full potential throughout their educational journey.

Part Four-Conclusion

In conclusion, the NDNA and Early years Wales Quality for All , are both essential pillars for early years settings. They both provide a dual layered benefit of advocacy and operational excellence , in which is key factors for an early years setting. Whilst the NDNA organisation acts as a powerful voice to working against policy alongside

funding, Quality for All(QfA) then serves as a mechanism for continuous development and quality assurance. Working together these organisations ensure that early years settings remain financially sustainable and legally compliant.

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