

2 portfolio 1, plus
giving a closer look



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2Portfolio In this assignment, the aim is to be able to critically analyse the way I implemented myself as a teacher during my placement on SBT 1, plus giving a closer look at ways I can learn from my initial experience and try to become a better teacher. I will do this by examining an incident that had happened in the classroom during my first placement. In addition, I will be using two well-known approaches by Tripp to allow me to evaluate the incident that I believe to be a critical one.

The approaches that will be used are, The Why Challenge plus The Thinking strategies, as these are two good ways of assessing what happened. Before I can talk about my critical incident, I need to elaborate on what I consider to be a critical incident. According to Tripp (Tripp, 1993, p. g. 8), he states that a critical incident is “ an interpretation of the significance of an event”.

Plus a critical incident is, “ a judgement we make” stating “ the basis of the judgement is the significance we attach to the meaning of the incident”. The importance of recognising incidents and taking a critical standpoint is to develop the skill set as an educator whereby one analyses their own teaching practice and is able to justify their chosen thought process of actions (Tripp, 1993). Critical incidents are consequential occurrences that take place in school. They are approached in a manner where they are analysed and scrutinised to develop an understanding of why they occurred (Tripp, 1993). Therefore after doing research into what a critical incident is, I believe this to be the case during my placement. IncidentThe incident occurred in my first school placement in year 4, which involved a child who will be known as child B. I was watching child B as he needs additional help with the majority of the subjects taught as he has special needs plus has a

low attention span. So he often finds it hard to complete work independently and more time needs help to do so.

Therefore in science I was helping the teacher and teaching assistant with assisting the children in the main topic which was to choose the correct animals, and to put them into the right categories, as the topic was on vertebrates and non-vertebrates and they had only recently started the topic so not all of the children fully understood it. During this time I went to help a child on one of the tables as he seemed to be stuck on how to manage the task, plus this child usually gets a lot of assistance from the TA. When I went over to help child B the first thing I noticed was that he had not cut out the animals and put them into groups, so I initially asked him if he understood the task and if he needed any help? I could see that he was a bit nervous and reluctant to talk or even work with me, so I decided to ask him what's wrong is he ok? He then replied, " You are not a teacher or a teaching helper, you can't help me". At this stage I was quite thrown back as I never expected him to say that, the teacher and teaching assistant came over quickly and spoke to him about my experience and to try to work with me, but he refused as I was not a women (the TA is a woman) nor am I old enough as the teacher in the class was older than me, so it seemed like he thought that I was too young to help.

After the lesson me and teacher spoke about the incident and decided for the time being it would be best that the teacher and the TA work closely with the child B as the academic had year only just started and he may need help understanding a few things, and for me not to feel offended by the issue. Thinking strategies Plus, Minus and Interesting Tripp (2012, p. g. 45) States <https://assignbuster.com/2portfolio-1-plus-giving-a-closer-look/>

that it is best that we use a variety of thinking strategies as this will help us consider what actions to take if the situation happens again. So through looking back on the incident and trying to find out what was the plus, negative and interesting during the incident, it allowed me the opportunity to assess what I did and how to handle the situation better potentially. Plus: even though in this kind of incidents there are not many plus points you can take from it, one could be that the child was aware of the different roles of the adults in the classroom plus understood who were possibly more equipped to teach and help him with his learning. Minus: Was the lack of respect he showed as the reasons that were evident in why child B said he did not want to work with me was due to me not being old enough to be the teacher which is not necessarily the case, as in schools there are teachers of various ages.

But it seems child B has not grasped these concepts yet so hopefully in time he will. Interesting: He considered females to be teaching assistants, as all three teaching assistants in the classroom are women so seeing me there and I was not the teacher must have been very confusing for him as I was trying to help child B with work but I was not a female nor was I the teacher so I assume he found that strange. Alternative, Possibilities and Choices Tripp (2012, p.

45) states that “ there are always alternatives, though we don’t always bother to create them”. This means that there may be other ways of preventing a situation from potentially happening. This is a useful way to reflect on the incident. A non-event that didn’t happen was me losing my temper and possibly raising my voice at child B. Even though I tried to make

child B do his work plus ask if child B needed help, I was able to stay in control and manage the situation even though I personally felt it was very challenging. I chose to stick to the class rules and the schools behaviour approach and tried to not let the situation escalates as due to reading the child's behaviour plan, child B could potentially get aggressive when he gets frustrated, so after asking questions to understand the problem I left the situation to the adults in the class that know him better.

An alternative event could have been if I had spoken to child B somewhere else, for instance in the library or in the quiet room where there are fewer people plus fewer disturbances. The reason for this is possibly that child B could have been acting the way he was due to being around other children in the classroom and may have wanted to make a scene. So if I had taken child B to somewhere more quiet and more private I could possibly have gathered more information on why he felt the way he did about me and ways I could help child B understand why I am at the school and my role. I do believe this approach would have worked since the child did not know me, so through conversation, we may have been able to sort out some of the issues the child had. Other point of view Tripp (2012, p. g. 45) believes that taking another person's viewpoint and looking at the situation in their eyes is very important to consider. These type of people are known as ' participants' and ' non-participants'.

Tripp describes a ' two-stage process' which involves us making our own judgement about their views plus results in us having a conversation with them to conclude what potentially their views actually are. In this situation, the other viewpoint was very important as I was not confident that I was

dealing with the situation to the best of ability and correctly. Initially what I did first was, discussing the incident with the two 'participants' who were involved at the time who was the teaching assistant and the class teacher. What I thought would happen was, the teacher would explain to me ways of making sure child B focusses on with his work and manages to complete the tasks in the given time, explain to me how to manage the child's behaviour when child B starts to refuse to do something. But to my surprise the teacher was very pleased with how I dealt with the situation, as he said child B is one of the harder children to manage in the class and even though I had not been at the school for long nor had been in that class for long, I managed the situation well and didn't make it turn into an argument. But what he said was from now on the teaching assistant and he would work with child B and try to explain to him why I am in their class for now.

The 'non-participants' in this situation were the children on child B's table and surrounding tables to him/her. Initially, I felt that all the children would get distracted and lose focus on what they were doing, but to my surprise, they all stayed focus and were concentrated on finishing the task the class teacher had given them. After the lesson, some of the children came to me and said, 'don't take it personally, it's just how child B is with new people'.

This also was surprising as I did not expect the children to talk to me about the situation. Parts and Qualities Tripp states that, when looking at anything, we can look at it physically, or we can look at it as a 'set of qualities'. Tripp (2012, p. g. 45).

What this quote means is that when we are in a classroom we must value our attitude, judgments and values as these are social practices involved when being a teacher. From the altercation with child B and him not seeing the purpose of me being in the classroom, I felt quite embarrassed. The main reason for me feeling like this was because, child B said what he said in front of the other children in the classroom if he said it in private I may have taken the response differently, but as it was amongst his peers I felt uncomfortable.

Plus other members of staff were around and because I was a new member of staff it made think that they would judge me. After that, I felt that child B had a lack of respect for me as I am older than him, but this did not affect my hunger to try and still help him with his work and try to find out the root to the problem, as there was an underlining issue that needed to be resolved. Reversal According to Tripp, he states that it is important to look at the incident as the other person. This is quite similar to ' Other point of view' as " The opposite is always a possibility, whether it is looking at something from the opposite point of view, or simply turning it on its head". (Tripp 2012 p. g. 45)If I look at this incident and use the reversal strategy the alternative for child B could potentially be, instead of ' Child B does not want me to work with him' I could have reversed it and thought to myself ' I will teach child B irrespective if he does not see me as a teacher or a teaching assistant, I will still teach him'.

Omission In any incident, it is imperative that we reflect on what has happened and try to see where we could of perhaps have made it have a positive outcome or less negative one. (Tripp 2002 p. g. 46) Initially, after
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the incident, I thought that child B was slightly rude and did not want any help from me. But when I thought about it and considered his reasons why. It became clear to me that child B just wanted help from people he used to working with and who he felt could help him with the task he had to do. Plus after talking to the teacher he cleared up a few of my thoughts on the situation, so I was able to understand child B a lot more. The Why?

Challenge Tripp (2012, p.

46) states that if we possibly ask ‘ Why’ something is the way it is many times over, we end up concluding that the situation is as it stands “ because that’s how it is’”. When using this strategy look at the situation that I was involved in, it made me think about this: Why must child B start working? – As that is one of the main reasons for why children come to school. Why should I stop working with child B? – So I can help the other children on the table and not spend all my time with one child refusing to co-operate. Why does child B not try to do the work that I am trying to helping him with? – Because he does not feel comfortable working with nor does he want to work with me. Why must I spot the pros and cons of the situation? – As this will allow me to work towards unlocking my full potential as a teacher and see where I went wrong in certain situations. Why must I make a positive learning environment for all students? – To allow all children the opportunity to feel comfortable as they learn. Through reviewing the situation, it has given me the chance to recognise the importance of self-reflection and pupil reflection to take place long term as a result of what happened.

Commentary During the portfolio part of this critical incident assignment using Tripp’s ideas, it has given me the opportunity to take a deeper look

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into the situation plus a better standpoint on how to reflect on the incident. Also, reflection can aid a person's judgement when making necessary verdicts. Trip (2012) states that it is "essential to the development of professional judgement" plus it involves some form of challenges and critique to our original ideas which in turn stops us going back to our existing ways. So from this, it has given me a broader view and has given me the opportunity to be critical towards myself in ways I may not have been previously. He also says that at time reflection can possibly be blurred by the norm of modern day society and this is one of the main reasons why our reflection warrants us to critique as we remain in these situations. According to Brookfield (1995), he has made a scheme to use when trying to reflect on a critical incident.

He believes that we should use four different lenses to highlight our role as the class teacher. They are: The pupil's view. Our own view. The various theoretical perspectives propounded in educational literature.

The view of those who work holistically with you in school. During the critical incident that I chose to highlight it initially required me to take many situations into consideration, experiences and beliefs into consideration before I went forward. According to Tripp (2002) this is a critical incident because child B who was on the table that I work with decided and took it upon himself to not listen to me nor attempt any of the work he was supposed to do during the time we were working together. Plus when I asked him why he chose not to do no work or be corporative he stated that I am not a teacher nor am I a teaching assistant. The only time he works is if he is working with the class teacher or favourably the teaching assistant that

knows him quite well as they have the class has had the same teaching assistants from when they were lower down the year groups, so he feels more comfortable with them. In the portfolio, I mentioned that I was initially shocked at the way child B was behaving towards me as I had never experienced anything like that before. Initially, I thought that child B may have been a naughty/challenging child and one that may take a bit longer to build a bond with in comparison to the other pupils in his class during my time on this placement.

However, it developed into a serious problem when he refused the work, but would complete work if I wasn't working with him. I chose to not shout at him or give off any signals or signs that I was annoyed with him or upset about the situation as I was not a hundred percent sure if child B was looking for a reaction from me. Plus based on my own personal experience and my personal views, they were even more tested as child B constantly said I was not his teacher and I had no role in the classroom.

I felt that he had a serious lack of respect that I believe all adults should automatically receive and especially within a school setting. Using Tripp's strategies (2012) I started to use these to think about my thoughts on the situation and started to build an overall picture of the incident. Trip (2012) talks about the significance when considering our 'routines' plus states that they are, "always present, but for much of the time we have to employ them quite unthinkingly because it is not yet possible to subject every routine to constant rigorous examination". Plus he further backs his point by stating that "it is important to regularly focus our awareness" on the different incident that occasionally falls outside of our normal 'routines' Recollecting

on my critical incident and linking it to Tripp, the above theory suggest possibly why I was so shocked with child B. Mentally as a teacher in any classroom or anywhere within a school you expect every child to show you a level of respect, be well behaved plus understand that as a teacher you are here to help them in their learning and they come to school to get taught by you and other members of staff. This mutual level of respect is emphasised by Knoff (2012 Foreword) who states that “ educators are now realising that we need to develop relationships with students” and we need to “ establish positive school and classroom climates”.

In addition to this Castle (2001, p. g. 11) states that “ It is necessary to establish some degree of discipline within the classroom in order for learning to take place”. In my incident, I used the Knoffs approach when dealing with child B as I felt that this way would be the best way of trying to manage the situation by questioning child B to see if I can help him at any stage.

The way that I tried to deal with the situation is somewhat similar to Tripp’s (2012 p. g. 46) ‘ Why Challenge’ as the why challenge breaks down a specific incident into appropriate issues via the use of questioning. With the help of this method and using Knoff’s (2012 Foreword), it aided me in identifying possible reasons for child B’s behaviour. Child B’s behaviour initially shocked me as it was something I had never experienced working with children. Williams (2016 p. g 11) states that “ When behaviour is mentioned in the context of small children, in nurseries or in schools, all too often it is because children are behaving in a way that adults want or like”.

This theory certainly applies when looking at my incident, as child B's behaviour was not acceptable to me on a personal level and also a professional level, the reason being is that it made me feel and look bad in front of the rest of the class. When looking into other strategies by Tripp, his 'parts and qualities' is another good approach to looking back on the incident as he encourages the ability to try and see the 'qualities' in a situation instead of it being made up of just 'parts'. When recollecting back on the incident I had with child B, initially, it felt like there was a lack of respect plus poor behaviour. But since then when looking at Tripp's views, I can now say that I am personally rather enthralled with Child B's ability to see and understand each adult's role within a classroom setting plus him being able to choose what impact he wants to have on each adult that interacts with him. All the other children in the classroom acted and behaved in an orderly manner and listened to my instructions but when it came to B he challenged me, questioned who I was and had the courage to not follow everyone else's actions nor wanting to 'follow'. This was quite interesting as this initially suggested to me that B wanted to stand out from the rest of his peers in his class.

Whilst observing child B throughout the remaining weeks on my placement I could see his deep desire and hunger to get gratification from the classroom teacher. From this, it showed me two potential issues. Firstly the behaviourist approach in schools is where an overwhelming focus on rewards and sanctions for children and secondly the importance of being popular and self-image in school plus in society. According to DeVries & Zan (1994 p. g. 267), they state that behaviourism is defined when " the child's interests and

purposes are irrelevant and leads to the teacher-centred power assertion in relation to children”.

When looking back on my incident, I think that this definitely relates to child B's behaviour in trying to gain reassurance plus positive feedback from the class teacher, who he felt had the overall power within the classroom, for example, it is like a king ruling his castle and everyone else in the castle is under him in the hierarchy of power. Proof of this is in my portfolio section where it became quite blatant that B was not going to co-operate with me and do his work that I was trying to help him with, but when the class teacher worked with him he would do it and seek praise for his work. Recollecting on this strategy that was used for B's work it possibly was successful in the immediate term due to the fact that he would do his work to the best of his given ability. However, it is not sustainable in the long run as he needs to stop trying to seek praise from others and try to do it for himself. Due to my lack of experience with dealing with the situation I did not look at the incident like this at the time, but if I could do this again I would try to break the barrier and encourage child B to either 1) Work with me or 2) work independently. The second strategy that possibly could be applied to the incident is the notion of popularity within schools. Initially when I was asked to work with child B's table I noticed there were five children sitting at the same table as him, each child would work in pairs when it came to paired work, however when it came to B working with a partner he would always be by himself, have to move to another table or would have to work in a group of three as he was usually not partnered with anyone. According to Ladd (2005 p.

g 152) states that “ Classroom behaviours include both ‘ on task’ and ‘ off task’ behaviours”. Not only this but “ Much is known about the classroom behaviours that are associated with acceptance and popularity”. When looking at this statement from Ladd it is easy to imagine the problems a classroom teacher may have since children’s behaviours are commonly influenced by their friends or other individuals around them and their potential behaviours. When looking a child B’s case he showed ‘ on task’ behaviour when the other teacher was around, plus he reserved his ‘ off task’ behaviour for when I was around. Child B did not seem disliked by any of the children on his table, possibly when he was outside in the playground or went to morning or after school club that may have been different, but it did seem to me from the outside looking in that he wanted to get accepted from the group at all costs. After reflecting on my own practice, it was difficult for me to possibly pick out child B and question him thoroughly in front of his class and table as it may embarrass him and could have a negative effect on him. As children can be really cruel, in the future I will try to consider various ways of engaging with a child when they possibly seem a bit distant. To conclude, from this incident I am now able to consider a variety of different strategies and approaches when possibly being confronted with pupils who may be off task and have challenging behaviours.

I can do this by asking more in-depth questions to find out what may have caused this behaviour plus be more observant before jumping to conclusions. As stated above I do personally believe I did well dealing with child B’s behaviour in the short term goal of trying to get him to do his work. It was just a decision I made when asking for help from other adults in the

room as due to my lack of experience I wasn't sure of how I should deal with the incident as its something new to me. Tripps (2012) theories have provided me with a more detailed way of thinking and how to look at each incident in different ways. " We must first change our awareness through deliberately setting out to view the world of practice in new ways", Tripp (2012) this furthered my depth of my initial beliefs on child B just being a 'naughty child'. The importance of being able to reflect critically allowed me to comprehend the feelings of children in a classroom, plus the importance of using different methods into engaging the children into learning.

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