

Unit 5: the principles underpinning the role of the practitioner working with chi...

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Unit 5: the principles underpinning the role of the practitioner working with children. E1) An early year's practitioner has several responsibilities in their professional relationships with children, colleagues, parents and various other professionals. The responsibilities a practitioner has to children are to ensure that their individual needs are met regardless of their individual prejudices, views, preferences and opinions. According to the children's Act 2004 the child's welfare is paramount therefore; the practitioner must ensure that they implement the health and safety policy within the setting to ensure that the child is kept safe at all time. The practitioner should respect and value the child's choices and wishes as well as put the needs and rights of the children and their family first. When working with parents as part of a professional relationship the practitioner should ensure that they work in partnership with the parents of the children. By working in partnership with parents the children will be able to meet their needs as their parents will be more aware of what these needs are and what can be done to meet these needs. According to [www. teachernet. gov.](http://www.teachernet.gov)

[uk/wholeschool/familyandcommunity/workingwithparents/](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/familyandcommunity/workingwithparents/) ' Research increasingly shows that when parents are involved with their child's education, children do better. Parental involvement is therefore an important lever for raising children's achievements.' The practitioner must recognize that the parent or guardian of the child knows the child best therefore any information that the parent could give to the practitioner such as the child's preferences can help with the practitioners practice and meeting the child's needs. When working with other professionals within the setting the practitioner has the responsibility to work together to meet the needs of the

child. This can be done as the practitioner, colleagues and other professionals will be able to support each other and using their individual skills and strengths. E2) There are numerous ways in which professional relationships can be maintained. For example maintaining confidentiality is an important factor when it comes to maintaining professional relationships. It is essential that any information about children and their families are kept confidential to ensure that the level of trust is maintained between the practitioner and the parent. If trust is not established between them then it is unlikely they will form a good working relationship. Information shouldn't be shared as part of the Data Protect Act. Within any professional relationship such as parents and practitioners it is essential that communication is both effective and clear. Parents and practitioners may need to communicate when discussing child needs at [aren't teacher meetings or if the parent has any concerns about the child. Information that is shared should be clear to ensure that the other individual understands what is being said and does not get the information wrong. E3) A multi agency team is a team of professionals that have different skills or training that work together to help meet the need of a child. Individuals who may work as part of a multi agency team are the practitioner, social worker, speech therapist or a health visitor. Working as part of a multi agency team can be very valuable when working with children and parents. This is because working as part of a team can provide many benefits for the children, parents and other practitioners. Children can benefit from a multi-agency team as their needs are more likely to be met with the help of other professionals. It can also improve on the child's outcome. This can be done as the professionals will be working

together with their different training and skills. For example if a child has a speech difficulty the practitioner can work together with a speech therapist to help that child. Parents can benefit from multi agency team working as their child's needs will be met and their needs are identified earlier. This will result in them being less stressed. Practitioners will benefit from this type of team work as they will be able to develop their role as a practitioner. The practitioner will also be given the opportunity to learn from others and gain support from other people in the team by utilising their individual skills and training. E4) There are several benefits of developing reflective practice within the setting. If the practitioner reflects on their practice they are able to identify the areas that they need help with such as their professional development such as their behaviour management skills. By reflecting the practitioner will also be able to identify their strengths. They are also able to reflect on their skills and experiences. As a result of reflecting their practice the practitioner will be able to improve on their practice which will benefit the child as they will be more likely to meet the child's needs as they will be adjusting their practice. One way a practitioner can reflect on their practice is by using Gibbs reflective cycle 1998. By doing this the practitioner will be able to review and improve their practice by discussing and thinking about their practice. Below is an example of Gibbs reflective cycle. [pic] Reflecting will allow the practitioner to set goals or plan the next steps they need to take to ensure their practice is improved. E5) The main principles that underpin work with children are the four set out by the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). It is important that the practitioner implement these principles to ensure that they are working effectively. Below is a

summary of the principles. Unique child: ' every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured'. Positive relationships: ' Children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or a key person.' This means that in order for a child to be strong and independent it is essential that they receive positive, loving and secure relationships with their parent or main care giver from a young age. If this does not happen the child can have a poor sense of self esteem and self worth. Enabling environments: ' The environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning.' By providing the child with a positive and enabling environment it can help with their learning and development. Children should also participate in indoor and outdoor activities to help with their development and learning. Learning and development: ' Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates and all areas of Learning and Development are equally important and inter-connected.' The practitioner should be aware that not all children learn at the same speed and that each child learns in different ways. E6) It is essential that a practitioner is aware and values children's interests and opinions. This is because the practitioner can reflect on their practice by planning accordingly to the children's interests and opinions for example if a child likes to write stories the practitioner can plan activities around writing stories which will help with the child's writing skills and creative development. Working based on children's interests and experiences as they will be more interested in working because they will enjoy what they are doing. Children will develop a positive sense of esteem and confidence if a practitioner is aware and puts

their interests and experiences into practice through activities. This will happen as children will feel that they are being listened to and they will feel important. There are several ways a practitioner can gather information about the child's preferences such as observing the child. For example the teacher can put a variety of different activities on each table within the classroom and they can observe what activity goes to first or spends more time with. Another way is to ask the child parents for the interests and experiences of the child. E7) There are several pieces of current research and initiative that relate to the provision of children, one piece of research is the Effective provision of Pre-School Education project (EPPE). This piece of research was the first study that focused on the early year's provision within the UK. This project started during the year 1993 and finished in 2003. This study investigated the effects of pre-school education and care on children's development for children aged 3 - 7 years old. As part of this study information from 30, 000 children from the age of three was gathered from the EPPE team. These children were studied longitudinally until the end of key stage 1 (KS1). The results of this study show that children who have books within their household will maintain a higher literacy level at the end of KS1. Another finding was that if children attend a high quality nursery provision from the age of three the child educational attainment will improve. For more information on this research please refer to appendixes one at the back of this assignment. One current initiative is Every Child A Talker (ECAT). This piece of initiative focuses on the development of language and communication of children from the age of 0- 4. This initiative was created as a result of the high levels of concern regarding the poor

levels of language development within the UK. The purpose of this initiative is to help more children achieve in early language, improve the practitioners' skills and knowledge and increase the parents understanding and involvement of the child's learning development. According to ECAT the practitioner and other colleagues must provide a stimulating, supporting and developmentally appropriate environment. For more information regarding this initiative please refer back to appendixes 2 at the back of my assignment. D1) According to the developing reflective practice handout page 114 reflective practice is " the process of thinking about and critically analysing your actions with the goal of changing and improving occupational practice". Reflecting on my practice as an early year's practitioner I would be able to improve and make changes if needed in my practice as I would be able to assess what I am doing well and identify any areas of my practice that I may need to improve by receiving training or through feedback of other colleagues on what I could do to improve. By reflecting on my practice I will be able to learn from my mistakes. By doing this I will be able to identify what went wrong and discover what areas I need to work on and develop ways in which I can improve to ensure that next time I do not make any mistakes. Being reflective in my practice will also allow me to set goals that can help me to improve as I will be able to identify how effectively I am working and see what I need to do in order for each goal to be met. By identifying my strengths whilst reflecting on my practice I will be able to recognise what areas I am best at and discover what makes these areas my strengths and apply these strengths to areas that I need to improve on. D2) Two things that I can improve on as an individual could be my organisation

skills and I can improve on my disciplinary skills towards the children within my practical setting. Two strategies that I can use to help me improve on those is the GROW model and employee appraisals within my setting. The GROW model is used in a variety of situations and is used most commonly for problem solving, planning and setting goals effectively. It was first developed in the UK by Alexander, Fine and Whitmore. The letters GROW stand for each stage of the model. The 'G': Goal setting- this can be either short or long term goals that must be realistic and achievable, 'R': Reality checking: is the goal that the individual has set realistic as in will the person be able to meet their goal effectively, 'O' within this model O can stand for either Options or obstacles: What could prevent the individual from achieving this goal or what resources are available to the individual to ensure that they meet their goal and the 'W' stands for what needs to be done, when, who and the will to do it? The person must be dedicated to this plan in order for them to achieve their goal. I could use the GROW model to help me with my organisation skills. Below is an example of how the GROW model could be used in this situation: G: My goal would be to become more organised with my college work. R: My goal is realistic because I will be able to do this. O: My obstacle would be that I may not be able to be organised for the long term and I may need to manage my organisation into small portions. W: I could create a small checklist of work that I should do everyday and set myself targets of doing a certain piece of work for a certain time. I will be able to do this by myself with the help of college lecturers and I will have the will to do it as if I set my self small organisation targets and I am able to achieve these targets I will be more motivated to carry out this

plan in the long run. The aim of employee appraisals is to provide the employee with feedback on their practice, identify areas of their practice that may require training, counselling, development and coaching to help improve their performance. I could use the employee appraisal to recognise my strengths and weaknesses such as my disciplinary skills. By myself and my supervisor recognising this as a weakness the supervisor can arrange for me to be sent on specific training courses such as an assertiveness course or a behaviour management course. By doing this I will be able improve on my practice as I will have the correct skills I need to effectively deal with any disruptive or negative behaviour. I may be given more responsibility or a promotion if my supervisor feels that I am working well and I am carrying out all of my responsibilities as a practitioner correctly. During an appraisal I will also be able to raise any areas of my practice that I may have about dealing with children, parents, colleagues or certain situations. As a student I can use my PDP to set myself goals for areas that my supervisor within my placement feels I need to improve on. This will allow me to reflect on my practice as a student and a practitioner. For example if my supervisor refers me on one core principle such as ' demonstrates professional standards of time keeping' I can set a goal of being on time more, this would be realistic because this goal will be achievable. One obstacle to me being on time could be the distance from my home to placement and in order to meet my goal I will need to leave my earlier or find a quicker form of transport. By doing this I will be able to reflect on what I need to improve and how I can improve on it. C1) It is essential that the practitioner implements the principles mentioned in E5. These principles will help the practitioners in their practice

within the setting as each principle puts the child first. The first principle 'unique child' has the commitment to ensure that children are kept safe " 1. 3 Keeping Safe Young children are vulnerable. They develop resilience when their physical and psychological well-being is protected by adults". An early year's practitioner must ensure that the child is kept safe whilst within the care setting this is part of the Children Act 1989 " the welfare of the child is paramount". This will affect my work as a practitioner as I will have to ensure that the level of risk and hazards are kept to a minimal at all times. This can be done by using the risk and assessment procedure. The Health and Safety Act 1974 sets guidelines for settings about how to implement health and safety. The second principle ' positive relationships' has the commitment that parents should be treated as partners " 2. 2 Parents as Partners Parents are children's first and most enduring educators. When parents and practitioners work together in early years settings, the results have a positive impact on children's development and learning". This will help me as a practitioner because I will be able to learn about the child preferences and experiences which will help me plan accordingly to this information which will benefit the child as I can plan activities that they will enjoy and learn more from which means that their needs will more likely be met. Practitioners must work alongside parents to ensure that the child's needs are met as it is believed that the parent is the child's first educator. The third principle ' enabling environment' has the commitment to provide the learning and environment ' 3. 3 The Learning Environment A rich and varied environment supports children's learning and development. It gives them the confidence to explore and learn in secure and safe, yet challenging, indoor

and outdoor space". The environment plays an important part in the child's learning and development therefore; the environment must be stimulating and be appropriate for the age of the child. For example children in nursery are more likely to have displays of stories on the wall where as a class in year two may have more displays of space or things that have happened in history. The fourth principle ' learning and development' has the commitment that children should play and explore to help with their learning process " 4. 1 Play and Exploration Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children's development. " This will help the practitioner do their job as children can play in a variety of ways within the setting to help them with their learning. For example children learn how to be creative and imaginative through role play and will help them learn social skills. This commitment also relates to Piagets theory that children learn through play and exploration. B) The Every child A Talker initiative helps to support practice within early year's settings. This is done as this initiative provides practitioners with information about how to develop children's language and communication. This is done as practitioners are able to identify what factors contribute to the development of communication and language development, plan appropriately to the child's language needs and make good relationships with parents. ECAT believes providing children with an enabling learning environment can help them develop their language and development. This means that the practitioner may have to adapt the environment to help support children's language and communication. This could be done by putting displays on the wall that show

letters and word of the alphabet with the pictures of the word. For example they can have the word Apple and then a picture of an apple. The ECAT Guidance for Early Language Lead Practitioners page 60 states " Ensure good opportunities for outdoor play as required by the statutory EYFS; children learning English as an Additional Language are often less inhibited in their language use when playing outside". This means that by allowing children to play freely outside they will feel as though they talk more than usual as they may feel as though they can be louder outside rather than inside. Children will also be more likely to talk more during role play. ECAT also provides tips for practitioners on how they can help promote children's language and communication. These tips include using gestures and visual resources to help their spoken language, ask children about things using the words here and now such as things you can see and hear, use language appropriate to their ages and pronounce words clearly, repeat both words and phrases as often as possible, give children time to respond when spoken to, emphasise key words and information and work with children in small groups to support language as well as help develop their social skills and confidence.