

Benefits of ict in early childhood education



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CHILDCARE AT HOME

Question 1

Explain the seven types of skills that children may develop as a result of using ICT.

One of the most important ways we can help children whilst playing with them in a child care setting is through h setting up simple activities to help them develop multiple skills and abilities. ICT is part of the children’s world today and it is relevant in developing different types of skills children need in their lives. In this essay seven types of skills which children develop as a result of ICT will be cited and explained.

Fine motor skills

Fine motor skills are movements and actions of the muscles and they are categorised in two groups. Fine motor skills are the small movements that occur in the hands, wrists, fingers, toes, lips and the tongue. These are the smaller movements that occur like: picking up and object between the thumb and finger, using the mouse to click, or select an object or shape, holding a pencil to write, holding a fork and using it to eat and other small tasks that occur every day. According to the study materials ICT requires many precision movements. Therefore children will develop fine motor skills to accurately control the mouse, clicking and dragging a cursor to select or highlight items of texts. Fine motor skills is about small muscle movement in

coordination with the eyes however fine motor skills do not develop in isolations from other skills.

Gross motor skills

Gross motor skills involve the movement of the arms, legs, feet or the entire body. This includes actions like running, crawling, walking, swimming and other activities which involve larger muscles. According to the study materials, Gross motor skills can be enhanced when children use the white board to record things, as they stretch and touch various parts of the white board and also using larger pens to write on the screen.

Creative development

As a child minder with a purpose for children's learning when providing ICT lessons my priority has to be to provide software they will use to learn through expiration. Employing elements of play, exploring alternative approaches will help children to employ imaginative thinking thereby developing their creativity. Children will play around with colours and graphics, dragging and dropping items onto the screen.

Mathematical development

Computers offer dynamic visual images that open up some areas of mathematical development in children. The use of ICT has a great impact on how mathematics can be taught to children. The use of easy mathematical teaching software will encourage children. The programmes will aid children and offer them opportunities to match shapes and carry out simple mathematical bonds as they play and learn at the same time. Computer

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graphics allow children to share mental images and patterns of structures. Counting images or icons on the home screen will assist develop early mathematical skills like numbers, shapes, size, quantity and patterns.

Language development

ICT should not only be computer based. It is important to develop an integrated, holistic and valid approach which will encourage children to develop their language. Such skills as listening, memory, expressing thoughts, ideas and feelings are gained. Children develop awareness that printed words have meaning. Children are able to use the key board to write simple words and their names.

Increase in confidence

ICT can be helpful and interesting if used in the right place and right way. Children under five have an uncanny knack of learning to master new technology. Children prefer to be left alone with things like smart phones, tablet computers, games consoles and use their intuition to confidently swipe screens and press buttons. Screens can be beneficial to learning and the more children are left to interact independently the more they develop in confidence. Heather Kirkorian carried out a research study and she says touch screens could hold educational potential for toddlers. She quotes; “ Kids who are interacting with the screen get better, much faster, make few mistakes and learn faster.” Online environments can provide children with a virtual space to develop confidence. Good.

Increase in world knowledge

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Children have to appreciate that modern technology is around to stay so be able to use the sense of investigation and exploration to develop their skills of observing. They should also appreciate that ICT resources speed different jobs and they are needed in home environment.

Social skills

In a child care setting where these resources are limited children develop social skills like sharing and team work as they do projects in groups. A lot of communication goes on as children work on their projects. They develop a sense of tolerating one another in all aspects of life.

A good explanation of the skills that can be developed through using ICT materials and equipment.

756 words

Question 2

Construct a booklet which can be issued to parents which identifies safety concerns for children using ICT and how these concerns are being addressed in a child care setting.

Little Busy Bees Child Care

Welcome to the little busy bees child care

We meet Mondays to Saturdays from 08: 00 to 18: 00. We focus on different activities to entertain children from nine months of age to school going age. We offer companionship for children whose parents have busy lives and

other commitments during the day time. We offer ICT skills from 14: 00-16: 00 every day. If you are interested in ICT skills only please do come and register your child. ICT is run by committed and knowledgeable members of staff.

What Happens?

The group is very informal but does have a basic structure. Children choose from a range of different activities provided on the software. Children are free to browse through and get to what interests them for we believe by so doing children develop confidence and various skills of using information technology. Children are then introduced to different educational structures with time while maintaining the feeling of play so as to capture their interest.

Safety First

It is the utter most responsibility of this child minding setting to provide and to make sure that the children using ICT are protected online as well as from a health and safety point of view in the physical setting. Children are grouped according to their age range and exposure to internet offered at home. Provisions for safe internet practice are offered to safe guard the children from accessing inappropriate materials and images and also against cyber bullying. Round the clock support is offered at all times by staff that closely monitor children, making that the children are not accessing inappropriate materials.

During this period children will be exposed to computers, laptops, Nintendos, iPods, mobile phones, play stations and X box. However some of these items

are toys, real items are limited so there will be days when children cannot access certain items and have to try different ones or play with toy ones. These items are monitored for inappropriate use to ensure that the children are protected from any danger.

If you have any suggestions of how children can learn in a safe ICT environment any ideas are most welcome. The safety of the children is a priority.

Our Aims

- To help children build upon the experiences they bring from home
- To assist children to acquire and develop practical skills required in ICT
- To support children to use ICT with confidence
- To develop an understanding of care and respect while using ICT

404 words

Question 3

Identify and describe the various ways in which ICT can be used to support Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. Reference should be made of the various types of ICT available, not just computers

Today children need a level of competency more than just functional skills to use ICT as life needs them to understand and use ICT naturally without fear of failing. Even young children in a child minding setting think digitally and they always take creative risks with technology. They need to learn how to approach these powerful forms of technology. ICT has to be included in their curriculum in various forms. Children attending my Child Care setting should

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be able to use ICT and programmable toys to support their learning. It is not only learning about technology, children need to be using it to support their development. Technology used well can excite and motivate children. It offers teachers the opportunity to promote skills and observe progress across all six areas of learning and development.

The use of electronic forms of communication can provide children with a variety of opportunities to read and write. Children can be exposed to role playing whereby customers send orders through emails and others respond to these emails. Children can be exposed to different toys that say words, letters and stories. They can listen to these and retell the stories or say the words thereby improving their language as well as literacy. Children also improve their communication as they play in groups for example doing jigsaws and role playing. They can compare shapes or objects and describe them using words like big, small, long, short as well as colours. Good.

Numeracy or mathematical concepts are part of everyday life and these include counting , matching, sorting, sequencing, making connections, understanding number values, recognising shapes and understanding number values. It is important for a child minder to provide a positive and enjoyable mathematical experience as the children's mathematical development will depend on them becoming confident and competent with a wide range of experiences. Children can be exposed to remote control toys to gain more confidence. They love toys that they can control and remote-controlled or programmable toys will be fascinating to them. Once the children have explored the remote toys and can use them confidently, they will need an environment for the toys to move about. Working together to

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create the environment will be a challenge in itself. Once children have had a good experience of using remote-controlled toys they can explore programmable toys. Children don't need to work out how to program sequences of instructions; they just need to work out how to make the toy move. The programmable toy can usually move distances which are multiples of its own length, and can only turn right angles or multiples thereof. The creation of an environment and making the programmable toy move will demand the use of mathematical ideas and methods to solve practical problems. Using or interacting on the computer or white board, sorting different coloured shapes sequencing them from small to big numbers will also help. Children should be given opportunities to transfer their learning from one toy to another. Investing in digital cameras can be a good thing as they're arguably one of the most powerful resources available to an early years setting. Photographs can be used to send clear messages to both children and their parents/carers. When child minders consistently take photographs of the children's activities sending them to parents/carers, it confirms that they value and want to celebrate learning and if recorded over time it also confirms that they value and want to celebrate children's progress. Children should know where they are kept, how to use them safely, and that they should always return them after use. Video cameras can be used to film children whilst they are learning and if this film is reviewed with the children it gives them the opportunity to reflect on their learning and explain their thinking, enabling child minders to have a clearer understanding of the child.

A simple hand-held digital microscope offers children the opportunity to explore objects and living things in microscopic detail. This can be used to talk about and compare different things. Children will develop a curiosity and interest in features of living things and will be encouraged to describe and talk about what they see and to look closely at similarities and differences. Using a computer mouse to navigate requires children to engage in activities requiring hand-eye coordination and use a one-handed tool whilst having fun. Children will need the mouse to be an appropriate size, about half the size of a standard mouse. Using smaller mice designed for use with laptops will fit perfectly under a child's hand. Children need to be encouraged to use community playthings, hollow blocks to build a tracks for remote-controlled or programmable toys, thereby lifting and moving the equipment safely. In this way they will develop and show awareness of space, of themselves and of other as well as physical development. (Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage, DCFS (2008))

813 Words

Question 4

Identify the ways in which families can become involved in ICT, including in particular the ways in which Child care settings can promote its use.

Communication with children and their families is essential in early childhood learning. ICT has opened up new opportunities for child minders to share children's progress with families. The use of the Internet for communication is continually expanding in homes. Increasingly, families using my childcare services might be familiar with technologies such as email, Skype, and social

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networking sites such as Facebook. These are the 'cultural tools' (Rogoff 2003) used to keep in touch with extended family and friends. Therefore it is important to add ICT to my communication 'toolkit' as this is another way of valuing the experiences children bring from home to the child care setting and vice-versa.

I believe children's learning is fostered when communication with parents/carers is actively maintained. ICT increases the options available for communicating with parents. Digital technologies incorporate a range of graphic and multimedia functions that appeal to both children and adults alike. Things like images and photographs can reduce language barriers. They can also communicate information to parents about their child which the child may not be able to relate. Parents might get excited after leaving their child for the first time and while at work they check their email and find a photo of their child relaxed and engaged with other children. It is unlikely that pictures of other children will be sent to a parent, for confidentiality reasons. It's quick and easy as pictures can be sent by email or posted on blog minutes after they are taken. Also attaching electronic record sheets and electronic news letters will be exciting for parents to read about what their children spend time doing. However not all parents are computer literate it will be a great gesture to discuss with such parents and advise them on the different courses offered free in their community. Offering to communicate with parents though emails will be a big step to encouraging every parent to have an email.

303 words

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Open study college Resource materials

[www. surestart. org](http://www.surestart.org)

[www. rachelager. co. uk](http://www.rachelager.co.uk)

[http://www. becta. org. uk](http://www.becta.org.uk)

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