



Froebelian Futures

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Practitioner Inquiry Project Report

Leadership opportunities & reflections

Project title

Practitioner Insight on Observing Children

Subtitle (if applicable)

Your name and role

Angela Kerr (Principal Teacher)

1. What are the implications of this research for:

- The team/setting as a whole
- Pedagogy
- Resourcing
- Policy
- The sector / your networks / management beyond your immediate setting.

(Please aim to write between 250 minimum and 500 words maximum, using the box below. Please do not disclose the identity of any individuals in your comments, as this form will be part of your colleague's public record of their project).

The team/setting as a whole

Within the setting the project opened up dialogue between practitioners about their observation experiences and techniques. It highlighted the varied experience of practitioners and what some staff brought from working in a variety of settings. Informal and formal recording of observation was widely discussed with practitioners then trying out other methods to recording. One of the most beneficial conversations centred on the importance of reflection. The difficulties around finding time to properly reflect away from the busy playroom was voiced so the practitioner have been finding ways to elevate this issue. Lack of confidence was also acknowledged and with this information management team can find ways to develop confidence through the buddy system and training.

Pedagogy

Observing children is key within the practitioner role. This project allowed us to look more closely at improving our pedagogical approach. As a team the research allowed us to acknowledge our skills and recognise areas for improvement. It also showed how observations influence our daily practice through tracking, special books, child-led learning and professional dialogue.

Resourcing

The setting will be looking at observation training for the whole staff team. Although some staff felt confident in their approach a refresh will allow the team to become unified in their approaches.

Policy

Observation is embedded throughout the settings learning and care policies as the individual child and their rights are at the centre. 'Realising the Ambition' also considers learning focussed observations and the benefits when it came to recognising the child's interaction style and schemas.

The sector / your networks / management beyond your immediate setting.

The results will be shared within the Local Authority Froebel sector (Froebel Friends) as we develop Froebel principles within our settings.

Within our cluster schools, nurseries and family centres research will be shared as part of dialogue during reciprocal visits and sharing dialogue visits planned for session 22/23 as part of our Cluster Improvement Plan.

2. What value do you place on practitioner-research – and what more can be done in your setting/locality to enable it to continue as part of routine practice going forward?

Research assists the practitioners in their own practice which improves outcomes for the children in the setting. The research keeps ideas fresh with a constant awareness of what is happening in the constantly evolving sector of education.

Within the setting as the research was carried out practitioners were querying the “why?”. Then as they realised that there were benefits to the research i.e. increased opportunities for training and sharing practice other suggestions have been made on what to research next. This demonstrates that there is a newly developing interest in research from practitioners that previously would not have considered this method of improvement.

3. What have you learned as a leader through supporting this research / programme? (100 words)

To be open and respectful to various ideas that I may not have considered previously.

That we need to embed a culture of research based practice.

To be flexible, adapt and support the researcher when there are time constraints due to staff absence.

To analyse results and data.

To have challenging professional discussions when looking at areas of weakness.

To seek solutions with the researcher and look ahead to how change can happen.

To look outwards to other authorities, to network and learn from what is happening across West Partnership and beyond.

Please save this document as a PDF and share it as feedback with your researching practitioner/colleague **and** with us at froebelianfutures@ed.ac.uk. Please ask them to upload it to their project report page (Edit > Question 12) as a condition of completing their certificate. If you have any questions about this process please contact us at the email address above.