



Froebelian Futures

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Practitioner Inquiry Project report template

For current students

Use this template to write up your project report, before sharing it with froebelianfutures@ed.ac.uk by your given deadline (if applicable). For current students, the University will then forward this for any further feedback to your Local Authority lead before returning it to you. If it is marked "Approved for publication" by both the University and your Local Authority you should then proceed to copy/paste your responses into the matching fields on the New Project Form under your profile at Froebel.ed.ac.uk. This is required before you can be certificated for your participation in the programme.

For past students, including *Froebel in Childhood Practice* students

Please use this form to adapt your essay/poster projects for sharing in the Inspiration Directory on Froebel.ed.ac.uk. Alternatively you can enter this information online by creating/accessing your profile at Froebel.ed.ac.uk and clicking "New Project". Please do NOT share posters or essays only, as the Directory requires these fields to be filled in so that they can be easily searched and quickly read by network members. Your poster and/or essay can be attached as a supporting document.

Project title

8 words maximum

Impact of freedom with guidance

Subtitle (if applicable)

Freedom With Guidance

Project summary (for website search results)

Briefly describe the topic or key issue(s) your project was looking at (30 words maximum)

Example: An observational study of whether 3 and 4 year olds of different genders favour similar or different schemas in their block play.

An observational study of the impact of “freedom with guidance” and how staff effectively, plan, support and facilitate this principle in our setting. To build the confidence of our practitioners for better practice. Ensuring children are leaders of their own learning.

Introduction

Summarise the key focus of your project and the main issues you cover. Why do they matter? (100 words max)

Example: This project looks at ABC... It takes into account XYZ factors / principal literature or policies. This enquiry matters because... My purpose in undertaking this work was to learn...

The project looks at the Froebelian principle “Freedom with Guidance” as it links with our planning process and will be hugely beneficial for the staff to make them more aware and improve their practice and in turn create a more enabling child led environment.

It considers methods used for planning, taking into account children's interests and next steps. The importance of observation and how staff must work with the children and observe, to build on their interests and ongoing development, that will generate fresh ideas for a better more inclusive child led environment.

Context

What was the situation of your setting, practice or research subject when you **started** this project, in relation to the question you were exploring? This might point towards demographics, pedagogy, policy, a case study, day-to-day experiences or other key contexts (200 words max)

At the start of this research, we gave our staff a questionnaire to gauge their understanding. We asked their understanding of the Froebelian Principle "Freedom with Guidance" and asked how they would facilitate this, and the impact this approach has on children and finally asked how they feel they could evidence this. The feedback was varied and mixed, some staff were aware of the term and understood the pedagogical approach and were able to relate this to their knowledge of child led.

Some staff had no awareness, and some were able to name ways of how we offer experiences and open-ended resources.

I also spent some time observing the playroom, the children, and the role of the adult. Some staff are setting up experiences that only have one outcome or they are not fulfilling the child's development with the experience set up. Staff are lacking in setting up rich meaningful provocations that have come from the children and will develop the child's knowledge and understanding further in something they choose.

Methodology and ethics

What unique things did you have to consider, and what choices did you make, about **how** you would carry out your project (200 words max)

To carry out this project we had to ask permission from the parents of the children we wanted to observe. I had a brief conversation with each parent to facilitate what my intentions of the project was, and they were all happy to oblige. We also had a meeting with all staff to make them aware of our intentions and purpose of our project.

The staff's enthusiasm was not as good as we had expected, we tried to advocate some of Froebel's principles and promote this practice inquiry course.

We plan to feedback our findings from observations and questionnaires and all information gathered to staff and parents through media, newsletters, charts etc.

Findings

What did you learn? What did you observe first-hand (if applicable)? What did this reveal, or what new questions does it raise? (400 words max)

I learned that not everyone has heard of Froebel's pedagogy approaches, and that our staff team is very varied in their way of working.

I observed firsthand that our practitioners are so quick to throw out an activity on the table or space, but they don't always have a reason why, or they don't take time to talk to the children about their morning before then setting up a provocation to support the spark the child has come to nursery and wants to learn about. For example there was a lamb jigsaw out with other shape jigsaws, the child was encouraged to do the jigsaw, and move on to a harder one the child got excited about the lamb, although nothing was said or taken forward to support this, I feel adding more props, spring books, farm animals or the smart board could have taken this child's learning further. I felt this initial set up was whether the child could complete the jigsaw and yes that is an achievement, but we must consider how we take our children's interests forward by observing them in their play.

Froebel believed that educators gain insight into children by observing, when they are engaging in child led play, these observations allow us to get to know the child, where they are at and how to further educate them.

Our practitioners are confidently able to observe our children and all staff really know all the children very well, especially they key group. It is what our practitioners do with that observation we need to develop, staff require more training in being able to meet our children's needs through sensitive interactions and how the staff set up provocations.

I think the new questions is,

What is a rich open-ended provocation?

How does this sit alongside the term "freedom with guidance?"

How can we develop this and create a more enabling child centred establishment for our children to grow?

Conclusion/coda

In a nutshell, what was the overall lesson? What might you do next? (100 words)

The overall lesson is it is amazing how few practitioners are aware of how Friedrich Froebel has such an influence of the work we do today. Staff need reminded to observe and tune into the child and support their learning, making the connections that are observation-based assessment of each child, this informs our planning and informs children's next steps building on knowledge of their own child led learning.

In a Froebelian environment it is the role of the adult to observe and as the adult offer careful intervention or guidance, although only if the child requires this to fulfil learning and move on.

Add one standout quote that captures the essence of your experience/project (optional, 50 words max). This could be from relevant literature or an anonymised participant.

"Freedom with Guidance is showing the child where to look but not telling them what to see."

We would like to include an image with your report when you come to publish it. Please attach this to the email when you submit. You should secure permission from anyone featured in the image, and any images of children should be obscured/take from behind, so that they are not identifiable. Alternatively you may choose to photograph objects, or choose a free image from unsplash.com

- CONSENT OF PARTICIPANTS -

Have you secured all necessary consents, and anonymised all data, relating to participants and settings in your responses above, including for any photograph submitted with this report?

Yes

Your name	Gemma Sharp
Setting / location	East Fulton Early Learning and Childcare
Your local authority	Renfrewshire Council
Date submitted / revised	9/5/88

The following page should be left blank for University and Local Authority feedback.

University of Edinburgh feedback – for current students only

<p>Project strengths</p>	
<p>Questions that might be useful to consider</p>	
<p>Changes required by The University before publication (typically relating to the anonymity of research subjects or settings)</p>	
<p>Approved for publication by The University of Edinburgh? <i>Approval must be granted by BOTH the University of Edinburgh <u>and</u> your Local Authority Lead – see below.</i></p>	

Local Authority feedback

<p>Additional strengths</p>	
<p>Questions that might be useful to consider</p>	

Changes required by the Local Authority before publication (typically relating to the anonymity of research subjects or settings)	
Approved for publication? <i>Approval must be granted by BOTH your Local Authority Lead <u>and</u> the University of Edinburgh – see above</i>	

Not approved?

If your project has NOT been approved by one or both of The University or your Local Authority, please make the changes that are required and resubmit directly to the person/organization that has not given approval. They should come back to you within 10 working days or less. If not, please follow up.

Approved?

Has your project been approved for publication by both the University of Edinburgh AND your local authority? Congratulations! You have passed a major milestone on your road to qualifying as a Froebelian practitioner researcher.

WHAT NEXT?

You should now share your final report with the Senior practitioner who has been supporting your participation on the course, so that they can complete the **Leadership opportunities and reflections** template in response to your hard work.

Once they have completed this, you have just four more steps to take.

1. **Copy/paste approved your project text (above) to Froebel.ed.ac.uk (My Profile > New Project form). Attach your image, and your senior colleagues' Leadership opportunities and reflections document. Once you have saved *and* submitted this on the website we will be alerted. It is a key requirement for your certification.**
 2. Peer review 3 projects by fellow practitioners by looking for projects from your course/year group that have less than three comments at <https://www.froebel.ed.ac.uk/resources/the-inspiration-directory/>. (This shouldn't take you more than 1 hour all together).
 3. Complete the second tab of your online Learning Journal (Becomings)
 4. Don't let your hard work fall down the back of the sofa! Start to plan and create your dissemination material/activity, so that you can share your findings in the most effective/appropriate way(s) with both your research participants (an ethical obligation) AND any other stakeholders who you would want to know about (and *act on*) your findings. This could include creating something with children which represents/responds to key findings, hosting a discussion for colleagues or with other agencies, making a short video, organising a demonstration event, arranging a policy meeting with managers etc. We strongly recommend that your emphasis is on active rather than passive dissemination.
- Return to your Profile > Project > Edit, and add the final section "Dissemination/Impact" to share a very brief account of what you did / images / video. (100 words max).