



Froebelian Futures

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Trust**

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

Having the Freedom to Bake!

Subtitle (if applicable)

Project summary (for website search results) (30 words maximum)

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

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

A practical project to inspire children's skill development in baking with their early years.

Introduction (100 words approx)

Summarise the key focus of your project and the main issues you cover. Why do they matter? Please do NOT repeat detailed information here which should come later (e.g. your findings or methodology)

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...

This project was undertaken by a group of 8 children aged 3-5 within a nursery setting. We focused our project on allowing the children to prepare and bake their own snacks during their time at nursery to develop their independence and to allow children to understand about the climate that they are currently living in. The purpose of allowing children to create their own snacks was so that the children were gained with valuable life skills that they could take later in life with them. The adults in our establishment ensure that the baking space is being used correctly by the children, by ensuring that there are the correct resources out for the children to self-select ingredients, then to follow the recipe and then to see the final product.

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. Please also reflect briefly on your own “positionality” (positive or other biases) in relation to your research subject. (200 words max)

An area was set up within the nursery setting during core time which were offered to the group of 8 children for 6 weeks, once the 6 weeks were achieved another 8 children would be offered the same opportunity. The imperative was to provide children with the developmentally appropriate resources in which they required to make progress in their learning. At the beginning of the project, a parent's survey was sent out to discover if they baked at home with their children, the purpose of this was to select our first 8 least advantaged children to begin our project with as we feel that baking can provide children with a wide variety of life skills. As we started our project, we discussed which recipes we could make for snack which included; banana bread, scones, bread which we would then make sandwiches with. By doing this, it meant that children would gain relevant knowledge on how to bake these things from scratch regardless of where they ended up in life. Froebel's principle 'Freedom with guidance' allowed the children to determine their own actions and choices whilst learning, whilst the adult role was more of a guidance for children in respectful ways. This is something that we focused on during our project to ensure our environment was well planned out. "The role of the adult is therefore essential in ensuring that all children's freedoms are protected."

Methodology

What unique things did you have to consider, and what choices did you make, about **the methods** you would use to carry out your project (150 words approx)

The project began with a questionnaire being sent out to 20 parents to discover which children are already developing key life skills at home through home baking/cooking.

It was concluded, that the majority of our children baked at home with their parents, albeit sometimes using premade cake mixtures but it was determined that they were developing skills such as cutting, whisking, beating etc. There was a small number of parents who admitted that they do not make enough time to bake at home. This is the group of children that we chose to give the opportunity to first.

Ethics (150 words approx)

Briefly describe any ethical issues you had to consider before or during your research, in terms of protecting children or adult participants. What were the different sides of the issues (if applicable) and how you adapted your project to take account of them. Did these ethical considerations influence your work or practice in any positive ways?

Introducing the children to baking their own snack, also sparked conversation about the cost of living and the price of ingredients used. The adults spoke to the children about the value of baking their own snacks and the quantity we can make, compared to quantity we would buy when buying the product already baked. Our children, understood that it was also much more cost effective to bake our own snacks than buy the product. I feel that this was a positive addition to the children learning key life skills

The questionnaires that we received from parents were anonymous and will be kept confidential within the parameters of The Data Protection Act. This reassures our parents who completed the questionnaire, ensuring the information they are providing will remain confidential is of the utmost importance and setting their minds at rest that will improve the survey response rates.

Findings (400 words approx)

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

I observed many benefits from the children having the freedom to bake their own snack. Froebel states that by mastering the use of tools, children develop a sense of autonomy which will result in them depending less on adults. Over the 6 week block children learned a variety of new skills through repetitive learning with an adult always close by. As the weeks progressed, children were less dependent of staff and by the end of the block staff found themselves being needed less and less.

Our children's language development was area that we observe progressed significantly throughout the block. We exposed our children to new words, expanding their vocabulary, allowing them to understand the actions that go with the different words. Children grew more and more confident at using the utensils as well. From our first baking experience to the last, children had learned the names for utensils and also the names of actions required while baking such as kneading, mixing and measuring etc to name a few.

The children used recipe cards to follow basic instructions and learned the direction which the recipe cards move in. The pictures allowed the children to follow the step-by-step method on how to make their snack. Again, this is something that supported the children more and more as the weeks progressed. Staff developed children's knowledge of following directions of recipe cards and reading the words to support children's early literacy development.

Through measuring jugs, spoons, scales etc, children are developing their numeracy skills. We observed children knowledge widen as they improved their counting skills for example, they needed 3 eggs or a teaspoon of sugar or half a litre of water.

We observed that children, learned quickly about quantity and measure. They learned that by putting in too much of some ingredients they could level it out by adding more of something else. We also noticed that this was a skill that children then started to implement into the playdough area. They have the freedom to make their own playdough batches and we quickly observed that if they added too much water, they would add flour to balance it out. The children work well on this together and often communicated with their peers what had happened in order to problem solve what to do next.

Staff were there to support the children when they made mistakes, some children needed reassurance during this time and others were happy to problem solve themselves. The more the children baked daily, the more they persevered with tasks, teaching them the importance of perseverance.

Conclusion/coda (100-150 words approx)

In a nutshell, what was the overall lesson? What might you do next?

Overall, the project was very successful. We received verbal feedback from parents, informing us that the children were actively asking to participate in baking at home and also talking about the value of producing your own snacks. Parents informed us that the children were also using new vocabulary that they had learned from their baking experiences such as whisking, beating and kneading.

Our next step is to take our children in groups to the supermarket to allow them to buy the ingredients to create their recipes. We have also been asking from our parents for some of our snack recipes, so we might create our very own Nursery Times Baking Book to send home or baking home link tasks for the families to create at home.

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.

“Froebel’s notion of the adult making rick provision, guiding children in their play and interactions, opening up possibilities rather than constraining them, helping children develop autonomy and self-discipline within a framework of respect for others remains a powerful approach today.” (Tovey, 2020)

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?

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| Your name | |
| Setting / location | |
| Your local authority | |
| Date submitted / revised | |

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> | |

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| 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 (please select "Ready to publish > Yes"). 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).