



Froebelian Futures

Delivered by



THE UNIVERSITY
of EDINBURGH



Cowgate
Under 5's
Centre UK

froebel.ed.ac.uk



Funded by
**Froebel
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). If it is returned to you marked "Approved for publication" by both the University and (where relevant) your Local Authority you can 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

How Does Your Garden Grow

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.

Developing knowledge and understanding of gardening through hands on experiences.

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...

The project focused on creating and developing a gardening space for children to learn, explore and investigate. As Froebelian approach states through gardening, exploration and outdoor play children develop an understanding of natural world and how to take care of it. The project required an ongoing consultation with management, staff, children and parents to achieve our aim of creating a green space to learn for our children and their families. The suggestions, opinions and views of everyone involved were taken into consideration throughout the project, ensuring all participants were satisfied with it.

Context

What was the situation of your setting, practice or research subject **before 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” (your positive or other biases) in relation to your research subject. (200 words max)

As a setting we are not fortunate to be surrounded by natural environment. We are located in the middle of a busy town, where concrete strongly dominates. The setting is also located on an old school playground, which means all the ground is covered in tarmac or rubber. However, the circumstances are challenging we have been looking to develop a green, gardening space for children and families for some time. The setting has already in place sustainable ways to teach children how to support life, local community and the environment. We are in partnership with local suppliers to be part of Fair Share Programme. The Fair Share programme inspired our children to grow our own vegetables that can be used within the nursery during snack time and throughout the day.

Davis and Brann (2017) study support the benefits of gardening in early years. The study highlights that planting experiences not only have impact on children's level of engagement, but also provides encouragement to try own grown produce.

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)

During this project we faced some challenges. As previously mentioned, one of them was lack of natural environment, which had to be created to be able to grow vegetables and plants. The other challenges we came across were resources/funding and the weather. By working with our parents and local community we have been fortunate to be donated a huge number of plants, acritical grass and seeds, which helped to completely transform our space. We were also the winners of competition created by local Dobbie's supplying us with £500 voucher to spend there. As team of staff, we have learned and promoted upcycling, recycling and reusing resources we already had or were donated by others. The cold weather also played an important role during this project , however we found a solution to not to set us back.

To gather views, ideas and suggestions to carry out the project we were continually involved children, parents and other staff in planning our next steps. The seesaw was used as a form of communication between staff and parents as well as verbal form of communication. The children were able to discuss their views by using mind maps, drawings and verbal communication of how they would like the project to evolve. The ongoing professional conversations between staff helped to ensure everyone is involved and aware of the progress. To capture the progress of our project we decided to create a dedicated floorbook with pictures and information available to access for all.

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?

To deliver this project there were ethical issues that had to be considered beforehand. Firstly, ensuring that all children and parents involved have signed a permission for sharing and using gathered data, including their pictures. The other issue was to provide an equal opportunity for all, by accommodating their needs and preferences, for example by offering twilight sessions for working parents. As a multicultural setting religious beliefs and views had to be also

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? Please consider including 1-2 mini case studies of children/adult's experiences, possibly as a baseline – i.e. before and after any intervention. Where appropriate use short quotes or close observation to bring participants voices to life.

At the beginning of the project, consultation with staff highlighted that almost everyone did not feel confident in gardening. The consultation with parents and carers also revealed that most of them are not confident or have not done any gardening/planting with their children before. The consultation with children has shown that most of them have a good understanding of planting and gardening. However, most of them did not have a hands-on opportunity to experience it. Personally, I also did not feel confident in gardening, but reflecting on it I decided it would be a fantastic opportunity for all involved to learn and support each other sharing our knowledge and experience throughout the project. After doing some research my confidence level increased allowing to support parents and children with needed guidance and reassurance. All staff and parents agreed that creating a gardening space for children will have an impact on their quality of experiences and overall learning.

The response we have received from parents willing to be involved in the project was overwhelming. Over 20 parents and carers have committed to engage in the project, also involving other members of their families such as siblings and grandparents. Some of the parents were keen to help using recycled materials to build planters and to create sitting/picking area where children can enjoy fresh air and have snack using their own grown produce. After having an opportunity to plant vegetables, fruit bushes, fruit trees, flowers, and other plants, one of the mum's decided that she enjoyed the experience that much that she is going to do it in her own garden. The families who do not have gardens in their home have indicated that they would be willing to help anytime as it would be the only gardening opportunity they have with their children.

The questionnaire sent to our parents have shown that they would like to be involved in more projects like this one in the future. After observing the interactions between children and their families I have observed that overall confidence has increased. The parents were more confident in supporting children, but also other parents. The children's learning is evident as they confident in their newly gained skills, sharing information with their peers, instructing them step by step what to do.

Conclusion/coda (100-150 words approx)

In a nutshell, what was the big picture/overall learning? What might you do next?

This project had a positive outcome for all involved. The children and their families were provided with space and freedom to try new things out, explore, experiment and investigate how the worlds work. The parental involvement and feedback from staff and all parties involved, encouraged us as setting to expand the project into our local community. We have reached out to local Community Garden, Friends of Barshaw, to inquire about an allotment. The allotment space has been granted and are in communication with children and their families to begin the planning stage.

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.

Through gardening and outdoor play children have real, direct experience of the natural world. they learn in nature not just about nature.

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	Justyna Watson
Setting / location	Williamsurgh ELCC , Paisley
Your local authority	Renfrewshire
Date submitted / revised	23/04/23

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

University of Edinburgh feedback – for current students only

Project strengths	
Questions that might be useful to consider	
Changes required by The University before publication (typically relating to the anonymity of research subjects or settings)	
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>	

Local Authority feedback

Additional strengths	
Questions that might be useful to consider	

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).