



Froebelian Futures

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Practitioner Inquiry Project Report

Leadership opportunities & reflections

Project title

The Happiness of Heuristic Play.

Subtitle (if applicable)

The Benefits Heuristic Play has on Children's Emotional Regulation.

Your name and role

Gemma Paterson, Head of Centre.

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

This practitioner inquiry project has enabled a key piece of research to be undertaken to help the whole team better support all of our children. The project has highlighted the importance of ensuring there are key times during a child's day when they have the opportunity to join quieter experiences which encourage them to explore and be creative in a space which is small, nurturing and quiet.

The project has encouraged the whole team to think about implementing heuristic play into the natural pace of the day and use this as a key piece of practice to support children's emotional regulation, as well as an opportunity to spend 1-1 time with children, nurturing and connecting.

Pedagogy

The practitioner undertaking the project has demonstrated strong pedagogical leadership in establishing her ideas and sharing these with others. The practitioner has focused on the ethics of the project and the implications of this with children and informed consent. The practitioner has demonstrated strong leadership skills which is being shared with others across the centre.

Realising the Ambition (2020) highlights the importance of learning environments which are responsive to the needs of all children. This project has enabled the team to delve deeper into the understanding of what all children need, particularly children who have additional support needs.

Resourcing

The project highlighted the importance of being committed to resourcing heuristic play to provide children with a breadth of resources to choose from. The practitioner leading the project has developed guidance for other members in the team, which highlights best practice when using and caring for resources.

The project also highlighted the importance of having a member of the team championing heuristic play to advocate this to other staff and to parents/carers. The importance of having protected time within the pace of the day was vital in ensuring children had a meaningful opportunity to engage.

Policy

This project has impacted positively on continuing to develop an inclusive and equitable environment for all as we consider how we capture children's voice and participation in many ways. We will continue to embed children's rights within the approach and consider the impact these have on the heuristic play experiences we are embedding.

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

The impact of this project should reach others beyond the settings as we share this across our Froebel networks and with cluster colleagues during open door events.

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? (100 word approx.)

I place extremely high value on practitioner research. The opportunity to focus on an area of interest which will impact children's holistic development cannot be celebrated or encouraged enough. Practitioner Inquiry enables us to evidence research based approaches which explore breadth and depth. This project has enabled practitioners to be reflective within their practice and pedagogy and ask the question of "I wonder if..."

Moving forward, practitioner inquiry projects will be implemented within the centre for practitioners taking on champion roles in particular areas. This links to best practice already being completed within the centre and developing this further to showcase the impact this is having on children's lived experiences.

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

As a leader it has been a pleasure to see a practitioner within the setting thrive on the practitioner inquiry project. I have learned that all practitioners have an area of practice they could champion confidently when given the time and resources to do this.

As a leader it has been interesting to take part in the face to face sessions and share project ideas/developments in other settings. This has enabled me to build connections with other settings and share best practice.

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.