Reflective Practice Youthreach Drogheda Ireland

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Inclusive Education and Reflective Practice

"**The roles and expectations from schools and teachers have changed**; they are being asked to manage classes with diverse educational needs such as disabilities, specific developmental disorders, emotional disturbances and socio-cultural and linguistic disadvantages." Carmela et al. (2014)

Schools and teachers often rely on the **routines of a highly structured environment** in delivering an education to students.

Action that is routine can constitute "habits of thought that are unsystematic, lack evidence, rely on mistaken beliefs or assumptions, or **mindlessly conform to tradition and authority**". Larrivee and Cooper (2006)

Inclusive Education and Reflective Practice

It is the recognition of a problem or a dilemma that triggers **Reflective Practice.**

Schon (1983) describes reflective practice as a **critical assessment of one's own behaviour** as a means towards **developing one's own abilities** in the workplace.

Given the **uncertainty and complexity** of their profession, Teachers must exhibit a "legitimate form of professional knowing" as **committed and autonomous decision makers**.

To make sense of professional practice teachers must try seeing "the same event from **different perspectives** – for example the viewpoint of a child, student, parent, carer, coach, mentor…" Ghaye (2011)

Inclusive Education and Reflective Practice

To aid teachers' reflective practice in meeting the challenges of inclusive education what was needed was…

"…the creation of 'knowledge-rich', evidence-based education systems, in which school leaders and teachers act as a professional community with the authority to act, the necessary information to do so wisely and access to effective support systems to assist them in implementing change." OECD (2009)

Through a series of interviews with teachers, we explored how the platform aided in reflective practice as an open tool.

Participating School

The teacher we interviewed took part in the implementation of the iDecide Project in Ireland. This took place in Youthreach Drogheda from September 2017 to June 2018.

Youthreach is a Department of Education and Skills (DES) education and training provision for early school leavers aged between 15 and 20 years.

The profile of Youthreach students includes many young people who have learning, emotional and behavioural difficulties, often aggravated by issues at home and mental ill-health (DES, 2010).

Up to 70% of students in Youthreach nationally present with Special Educational Needs with a significantly higher rate of Adverse Childhood Events compared to longitudinal study norms. (NEPS 2017).

The Teachers' Perspective

Clare Shanks, teacher, Drogheda Youthreach, LMETB, Ireland

The Teachers' Perspective

Desmond Donagh, teacher, LMETB, Ireland

Case Study : Student Poll

Case Study: Student Poll

Students voted on the school lunch menu for

a practical exam class to make.

Facilitated through the iDecide online

platform, the impact of the exercise was

explored both in the short and long term.

Which meal should the LCA class make?

Vote for your favourite lunch!! The LCA class are making lunch for the centre as part of a project. All students in the centre are asked to vote on which dish they would prefer. The dish with the most votes will be made for the centre on Wednesday the 28th of February.

Message!

❶ Voting is closed for this poll.

✽ Pepperoni Pizza with Homemade Wedges (4 votes / 26.67%)

✽ Chicken Curry with Fried Rice (5 votes / 33.33%)

✽ Stuffed Loin of Pork with Roast Potatoes (6 votes / 40%)

Case Study: Short Term

Enthusiasm: Generated a positive energy towards to the decision being made.

Debate: The choice of options prompted debate between students

Confidence: The class more assured of the decision they made

Prior Notice: Eased the tension in anxious students

Empowerment: Students felt they had an equal say

Voting: Experience of voting and democracy

Case Study: Long Term

Adopted: Regular weekly student input into lunch menu

Appreciation: Greater buy-in and appreciation shown by student

Debate : Weekly student input has been a source of debate, cooperation and deal-making

Student Voice: Wider input and engagement on centre issues by students

Awareness: Increased staff awareness of seeking opinions of students

iDecide

Thank you!