

Theory, Practice and Context

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Pawel is Polish. He is 3 years old, and he has started to attend a playgroup, which is influenced by Froebelian principles. But the practitioners are not aware that their practice follows this approach. One day, a visitor asks them if they follow any particular approach. They certainly try to embed the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework, which since 2008 has become legally enshrined, but in discussion with their visitor, after the children have gone home, they explore the possibility that they are in fact using Froebelian principles. The visitor is Froebel trained. After gaining some practical experience following her degree in Early Childhood Studies and taking the fast-track route to the Early Years Practitioner Status, she decided to gain accreditation from the newly established Froebel Certificate Course at Roehampton University.

Together they looked at the way they had worked with Pawel that morning. They decided that aspects of their practice were following a Froebelian approach, and made a plan to find out more. They invited the visitor to come and talk to them about one of the areas that had interested her about their practice, which was the way they supported the children in their play. As a result of this, the supervisor of the playgroup decided to undertake the Froebel certificate course, so that they could develop their practice.

Reflective questions

- Do you follow a particular approach in your work with young children? How do you know you do or don't? Do you use your original training to help you be clear about your approach, or current in-service training, or reading?
- Do you reflect on your practice with your colleagues? How do you go about this?
- Do you make plans together to develop the practice in your setting? Is there any consistency in the courses you attend, which helps you to share ideas and develop them?