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Shaping the Future

Supporting Aistear in action



Early Excellence
Centre for Inspirational
Learning



“Children are the living messages we send to a time we will not see.”

Neil Postman,
The Disappearance of Childhood (1982),



“Choices and actions taken....during this critical period affect not only how a child develops but also how a country progresses”

The State of the World's Children;
UNICEF (2001)



What we know about Child Development

- Development proceeds at varying rates from child to child as well as unevenly within different areas of children's functioning;
- The domains of children's development – physical, social, emotional and cognitive are closely related;
- Development proceeds in predictable directions towards greater complexity, organisation and internalisation;
- Play is an important vehicle for children's social, emotional and cognitive development;
- Development advances when children have opportunities to practice new skills and they experience challenge just beyond their level of mastery;
- Children demonstrate different modes of learning and different ways of representing what they know.

'Developmentally Appropriate Practice'

Bredekamp and Copple



Young children learn by...

- Feeling secure
- Watching, imitating and being supported by the adults around them
- Self regulating
- Processing multi-sensory experiences
- Cognitive and physical challenge
- Articulating their own learning



Learning

- Learning as a **quantitative increase in knowledge**. Learning is acquiring information or “knowing a lot”
- Learning as **memorising**. Learning is storing information that can be reproduced.
- Learning as acquiring facts, skills and methods that can be **retained and used as necessary**.
- Learning as **making sense** or abstracting meaning. Learning involves relating parts of the subject matter to each other and to the real world.
- Learning as interpreting and **understanding reality in a different way**. Learning involves comprehending the world by re-interpreting knowledge.



Curriculum
content

Learning
behaviours



“There are two lasting bequests we can give our children: one is roots and the other is wings”

Hodding Carter



Prof. Ferre Laevers

Leuven University, Flanders

- Well Being
- Levels of Child Involvement
- Levels of Adult Engagement
- Process Orientated Monitoring System (POMS)



Fixed and Growth Mindset



Carol Dweck



Definition and role of assessment

“Knowing and understanding children in order to support their learning and development” (*Dubiel*)

Which

- Expresses values of education and perception of learners
- Defines the curriculum, pedagogy and outcomes
- Enables accountability

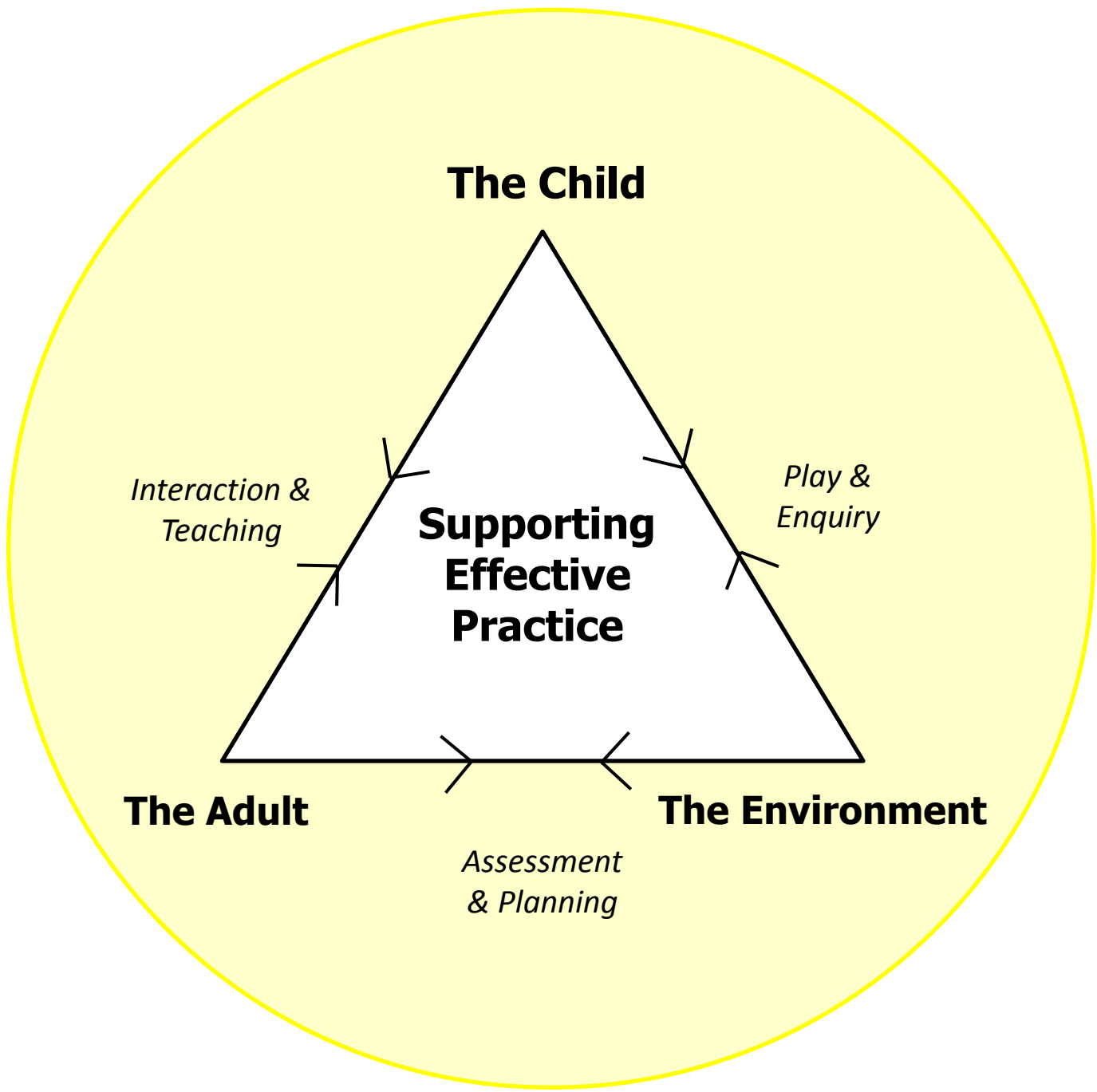
“Assessment is the ongoing process of **collecting, documenting, reflecting on, and using** information to develop rich portraits of children as learners in order to support and enhance their future learning.” (*Aistear*)



Early Excellence Statement of Belief

“At Early Excellence we have a deep commitment to and understanding of **play-based, active learning**. We know that planning **rich, memorable contexts for learning** that connect with **children’s interests** inspire children and **promote greater levels of involvement**.

Having **ownership** of the learning process is also key, providing children with the motivation to use their **independent learning skills**, their **creative, imaginative and investigative thinking**.”



The Child

*Interaction &
Teaching*

*Play &
Enquiry*

**Supporting
Effective
Practice**

The Adult

The Environment

*Assessment
& Planning*



“We become ourselves
through others”

Vygotsky



Responding ... by encouraging children to

- express their thoughts and ideas
- talk about what they are doing
- reflect on their ideas
- ask questions and work things out for themselves
- think creatively and solve problems



Contributing by...

- introducing a new stimulus or key vocabulary
- giving direction and instruction
- demonstrating skills
- modelling language and behaviour
- documenting and re-proposing ideas



7 selves of the plural practitioner

- Critical reflector
- Carer
- Communicator
- Facilitator
- Observer
- Assessor
- Creator

'The Role of the Adult in Early Years Settings'

Rose and Rogers 2012



Considerations for supporting practitioners

- Exploring and acknowledging values and aspirations for children
- Ensuring an awareness of responsibility and impact
- Developing confidence and willingness to trust intuition and experience
- Encouraging reflective, informed approach that takes risks
- Ensuring access to and understanding of research and pedagogical developments
- Fully understand the principles and rationale of Aistear



Implications and realisations...

- Access to high quality training, training programmes and CPD
- Tailored support and mentoring
- Excellence hubs
- A focus on outcomes and processes
- National acknowledgement, recognition and support



The Pedagogista

- Works with groups of schools
- Develops and supports practice and pedagogy through supportive mentorship
- Encourages critical thinking and reflection
- Develops awareness of the theory underpinning practice

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