

Level 3 Examiners' Report

Children's Care, Play, Learning and Development:
Practice and Theory

Unit 330 and Unit 331

Summer 2026

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Introduction

Our Principal Examiners' report provides valuable feedback on the recent assessment series. It has been written by our Principal Examiners and Principal Moderators after the completion of marking and moderation, and details how candidates have performed in each unit.

This report opens with a summary of candidates' performance, including the assessment objectives/skills/topics/themes being tested, and highlights the characteristics of successful performance and where performance could be improved. It then looks in detail at each unit, pinpointing aspects that proved challenging to some candidates and suggesting some reasons as to why that might be.¹

The information found in this report provides valuable insight for practitioners to support their teaching and learning activity. We would also encourage practitioners to share this document – in its entirety or in part – with their learners to help with exam preparation, to understand how to avoid pitfalls and to add to their revision toolbox.

Further support

Document	Description	Link
Professional Learning / CPD	WJEC offers an extensive programme of online and face-to-face Professional Learning events. Access interactive feedback, review example candidate responses, gain practical ideas for the classroom and put questions to our dedicated team by registering for one of our events here.	https://www.wjec.co.uk/home/professional-learning/
Past papers	Access the bank of past papers for this qualification, including the most recent assessments. Please note that we do not make past papers available on the public website until 12 months after the examination.	Portal by WJEC or on the WJEC subject page
Grade boundary information	Grade boundaries are the minimum number of marks needed to achieve each grade. For unitised specifications grade boundaries are expressed on a Uniform Mark Scale (UMS). UMS grade boundaries remain the same every year as the range of UMS mark percentages allocated to a particular grade does not change. UMS grade boundaries are published at overall subject and unit level. For linear specifications, a single grade is awarded for the subject, rather than for each unit that contributes towards the overall grade. Grade boundaries are published on results day.	For unitised specifications click here: Results, Grade Boundaries and PRS (wjec.co.uk)

¹ Please note that where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.

Exam Results Analysis	WJEC provides information to examination centres via the WJEC Portal. This is restricted to centre staff only. Access is granted to centre staff by the Examinations Officer at the centre.	Portal by WJEC
Classroom Resources	Access our extensive range of FREE classroom resources, including blended learning materials, exam walk-throughs and knowledge organisers to support teaching and learning.	https://resources.wjec.co.uk/
Bank of Professional Learning materials	Access our bank of Professional Learning materials from previous events from our secure website and additional pre-recorded materials available in the public domain.	Portal by WJEC or on the WJEC subject page.
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Executive Summary

Unit 330

Most candidates attempted all questions, and responses were typically clear and well structured. Overall, candidate performance was positive, with many demonstrating secure subject knowledge and understanding. Where marks were lost, this was often due to insufficient attention to command verbs, with some responses relying on lists or brief statements rather than the detailed explanations, discussions, and evaluations expected at Level 3.

Strong performance was evident in questions relating to holistic child development, support services, and educational approaches. Responses discussing the benefits of youth clubs demonstrated a clear understanding of how participation contributes to social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development through enhanced confidence, communication, teamwork, and independence. Similarly, candidates showed a strong grasp of the benefits of Flying Start, recognising its contribution to children's development, family support, and improved outcomes through integrated services.

Candidates also performed particularly well in questions relating to Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinators (ALNCo), where they identified key responsibilities such as early identification of needs, development of Individual Development Plans (IDPs), collaboration with families and professionals, and provision of tailored support. Montessori's approach to learning was another area of strength, with candidates demonstrating a sound understanding of child-centred learning, independence, exploration, and enabling environments.

Good levels of understanding were also demonstrated in relation to the Healthy Schools Scheme, parenting styles, CAMHS, sensory learning, and routine screening during pregnancy. Candidates successfully identified key concepts and benefits associated with these topics. However, higher-mark responses could have been strengthened through greater use of detailed explanations, practical examples, and clearer links between theory and outcomes for children, young people, and families.

One area requiring further development was candidates' understanding of Allied Health Professionals (AHPs). While many recognised the importance of multi-agency support, some incorrectly identified professionals such as doctors, midwives, and health visitors as AHPs. Greater emphasis is needed on recognising specific AHP roles and understanding the specialist support they provide.

The report highlights a consistent pattern across the examination: candidates frequently demonstrated knowledge of relevant concepts but did not always develop responses sufficiently to meet the demands of higher-order command verbs such as explain, discuss, assess, justify, and examine. Centres should therefore focus on developing candidates' written communication skills, encouraging them to expand points with examples, make explicit links to outcomes for children, and evaluate the impact of practices and interventions. In conclusion, the examination demonstrated that most candidates possess a solid foundation of knowledge across the unit content. Future performance could be enhanced through greater emphasis on response development, application of theory to practice, and accurate use of subject-specific terminology. By strengthening these skills, candidates will be better positioned to access the highest mark bands and demonstrate the depth of understanding expected at Level 3.

Unit 331

Overall, candidates demonstrated a sound understanding of their chosen topics and generally produced well-structured investigations supported by relevant examples from theory and workplace experience. Higher-performing candidates showed strong analytical skills, critical thinking, and the ability to connect research findings with practical experiences. Lower-performing responses tended to be descriptive, lacked depth of evaluation, and made weaker links between theory, legislation, research evidence, and practice.

Most candidates selected the topic exploring current and contemporary factors affecting children's health and well-being. Strong responses examined issues such as mental health, family structure, social media, financial hardship, additional learning needs, self-image, and the experiences of young carers. Candidates successfully linked theoretical knowledge to workplace practice and personal experiences, demonstrating an understanding of how these factors influence children's development. A smaller number selected the topic focusing on the Curriculum for Wales and the value of engaging activities in supporting holistic development. Strong investigations explored child-centred, play-based, and experiential learning approaches, making clear links to children's physical, cognitive, emotional, social, and language development.

Across both topics, the quality of research varied considerably. Candidates who critically evaluated evidence, used reliable sources, and supported conclusions with relevant research achieved higher grades. Common weaknesses included limited referencing, lack of depth in analysis, and insufficient evidence to support findings. The report highlighted the importance of encouraging greater independence, as some investigations reflected centre-directed approaches rather than individual research interests and critical reflection. Candidates selected either a focus on the value of health and education services that support early intervention or an investigation into factors influencing children's behaviour. Performance across the six assessment tasks reflected similar strengths and areas for development.

Higher-achieving candidates clearly identified focused research areas, justified their choices, explained their research methods, and demonstrated strong academic writing from the outset. Throughout the investigation, successful candidates critically discussed how their chosen topics influenced children's care, play, learning and development, incorporating multiple viewpoints, workplace examples, Welsh legislation, theoretical perspectives, and accurately referenced evidence.

Tasks requiring evaluation and assessment proved more challenging for some candidates. While many demonstrated good knowledge of professional values, principles, legislation, and frameworks, weaker responses often described these factors rather than evaluating their effectiveness or impact in practice. Stronger responses effectively linked Welsh legislation, such as the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act and the Curriculum for Wales, to real experiences in childcare settings and assessed how these have shaped current practice.

Candidates generally showed a good understanding of future developments within the sector and recognised how research-informed practice can improve outcomes for children. Reflective tasks were completed well overall, with many candidates identifying how their learning would influence future professional practice, improve collaboration with colleagues, and enhance support for children and families.

Examiner feedback emphasised several key areas for future improvement: maintaining a clear structure across all tasks, selecting focused and manageable research areas, using Harvard referencing consistently, avoiding bullet-point responses and proformas, clearly linking all tasks to the chosen topic, and demonstrating greater independence and personal reflection. Candidates who effectively combined research, theory, legislation, practice, and critical evaluation were most successful in accessing the highest mark bands.

CHILDREN'S CARE, PLAY, LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT: PRACTICE AND THEORY

Level 3

Summer 2026

UNIT 330: PRINCIPLES AND THEORIES THAT INFLUENCE CHILDREN'S CARE, PLAY, LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE 21ST CENTURY IN WALES

Overview of the Unit

The Level 3 Children's Care, Play, Learning and Development: Practice and Theory examination included questions that addressed one or more assessment objectives (AO1, AO2 and AO3). A balanced range of lower and higher tariff questions covered the breadth of the Unit 300 specification, assessing candidates' knowledge and understanding of the principles and theories across Topics 1–5. The style of questions reflected those used in the Sample Assessment Materials (SAMs), providing candidates with a familiar format. There were no unexpected question types, and overall candidates engaged well with the paper, demonstrating confidence in responding to the majority of questions.

The aim of the unit is to build on theoretical knowledge while extending practical understanding, enabling candidates to apply their learning and experiences when answering examination questions. Overall, candidates responded well, making clear attempts to address the command verbs and structure of each question. The paper proved accessible to most candidates, with time generally managed effectively. Assessments were completed both online and as written papers, with English and Welsh versions available. Responses were generally clear, with many candidates making effective use of additional answer sheets where appropriate to develop their ideas further. All questions were attempted by the vast majority of candidates.

While the quality of responses varied, many candidates demonstrated secure knowledge and understanding. Where marks were lost, this was often because responses did not fully address the requirements of the command verbs. In some cases, candidates relied on lists or bullet points rather than providing the developed explanations or discussions expected at Level 3, which limited their opportunity to demonstrate the depth of knowledge and understanding required.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Q.1 Learning Welsh can help children gain a sense of Welsh identity and culture, and support speech, language and communication development.

Explain how childcare workers can support children's bilingual development.

Candidates identified a range of appropriate ways childcare workers can support children's bilingual development, including using Welsh regularly, repeating key words, using songs, games, visual aids, and encouraging communication during daily activities. The responses mainly listed strategies and needed more explanation of how these support bilingual development. Adding examples and linking strategies to children's speech, language, communication skills, and understanding of the immersion of the Welsh language would have strengthened the response. Candidates generally showed a good understanding of ways to support bilingual development. More explanation and detail of bilingual development would improve the quality of the response.

Q.2 Engaging in youth clubs can have positive benefits for children's development.

Discuss the benefits of attending a youth club for a child's holistic development.

Candidates provided detailed responses and demonstrated a strong understanding of how youth clubs support children's holistic development. They clearly explained the benefits for social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development, using relevant examples such as developing friendships, confidence, independence, teamwork, communication, and problem-solving skills. The responses also recognised the importance of youth clubs in promoting the responses were comprehensive. To strengthen them further, candidates could include more specific examples to illustrate how particular activities support children's development. The candidates demonstrated a very good understanding of the benefits of youth clubs and provided well-developed responses with clear links to holistic development.

Q.3 Describe how the Healthy Schools Scheme promotes the health and well-being of children.

The candidates showed a good understanding of how the Healthy Schools Scheme supports children's health and well-being. They identified key areas including healthy eating, physical activity, mental health, hygiene, safety, and creating a positive school environment. The responses could include more examples of activities and explain how these support children's health and development. The candidates provided relevant and detailed responses, showing a good understanding of the scheme's benefits.

Q.4 (a) Actions, attitudes, and experiences in the home and outside of the home environment can impact on a child's behaviour.

Assess different parenting styles and how they can affect a child's behaviour.

(b) Suggest how childcare workers can support positive behaviour in a childcare setting.

The candidates demonstrated a good understanding of how different parenting styles can affect children's behaviour. They identified positive impacts, such as confidence, emotional stability, independence, understanding boundaries, and positive behaviour. They also recognised negative impacts, including anxiety, low self-esteem, confusion, and challenging behaviours caused by inconsistent or unclear expectations. The responses could be strengthened by including more detail about specific parenting styles and explaining how each style may influence children's behaviour and development. The candidates showed a good understanding of how parenting approaches and home experiences can impact children's behaviour.

- Q.5 (a) Teams and services in Wales are often engaged to support positive behaviour in children and young people.**

Outline the types of support that can be provided through the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)

The candidates showed a good understanding of the support provided by CAMHS. They identified a range of services, including support for emotional well-being, anxiety, depression, eating disorders, crisis support, substance misuse, and working with families and other professionals. The responses could include more explanation of how CAMHS support helps children and young people manage their mental health, emotions, and behaviour. Candidates demonstrated a good understanding of the different types of support available through CAMHS.

- (b) Summarise the benefits of the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) when supporting children's mental health and wellbeing.**

The candidates demonstrated a good understanding of the benefits of CAMHS in supporting children's mental health and well-being. They identified areas such as early intervention, developing coping skills, improving well-being, supporting recovery, and helping children and young people manage challenges. The responses could include more specific examples of how CAMHS support impacts children's daily lives, confidence, relationships, and future outcomes. The candidates showed a good understanding of how CAMHS provides support and promotes positive mental health outcomes for children and young people

- Q.6 Discuss the value and impact of routine screening, monitoring and testing during pregnancy**

Candidates demonstrated a strong understanding of the value of routine screening, monitoring, and testing during pregnancy. They identified a range of checks, including blood tests, ultrasound scans, blood pressure, urine tests, and monitoring the health and development of the baby. The responses also recognised the importance of early identification of health concerns and providing appropriate support. Responses could be strengthened by explaining more clearly how these checks help support decision-making, early intervention, and safer outcomes for both the mother and baby. Candidates provided detailed responses and showed a good understanding of how pregnancy screening and monitoring support maternal and baby health.

- Q.7 Allied health professionals (AHPs) are a diverse group of specialists who provide essential support and services to health care teams.**

Describe the role of two different AHPs.

The candidates showed an awareness of the range of professionals involved in supporting children and families. Responses would benefit from a clearer understanding of the specific roles of Allied Health Professionals (AHPs). Some examples provided, such as dentists, GPs, health visitors, and midwives, which although are important health professionals they are not classed as AHPs. Candidates needed to provide specific focus on identifying the specialist roles that fall within the AHP group.

Candidates generally showed some understanding of the health care support roles but would benefit from developing their knowledge of AHPs and the services they provide.

Q.8 Children with additional needs benefit from sensory learning opportunities.

Explain how a range of activities and resources can engage the children's senses.

The candidates demonstrated a good understanding of sensory learning and identified a range of activities and resources that engage different senses. They included examples linked to sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch, such as sensory toys, music, food activities, outdoor experiences, and tactile play. Responses could be strengthened by explaining how these activities support children with additional needs, for example by developing communication, engagement, confidence, relaxation, and exploration skills. Candidates showed a good understanding of sensory activities and provided relevant examples to support children's learning and development.

Q.9 Through classroom observations it is noticed that Alex is struggling with reading and writing comprehension which is affecting academic ability in most lessons.

Justify the benefits of the role of the Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinator (ALNCo) in meeting Alex's specific learning needs.

The candidates provided detailed responses and demonstrated a strong understanding of the role of the ALNCo in supporting children with additional learning needs. They identified key responsibilities including early identification, assessment, creating Individual Development Plans (IDPs), supporting staff, working with parents/carers and external agencies, and providing suitable resources and adjustments to meet individual needs. Responses provided were generally very comprehensive and detailed. To strengthen the responses further, candidates could have made clearer links between the ALNCo's support and how this would directly improve Alex's reading, writing, confidence, and academic progress. Candidates showed a very good understanding of the ALNCo role and how personalised support can help meet Alex's specific learning needs.

Q.10 (a) Maria Montessori's approach is based on the belief that children learn through exploration of their environment.

Reflect Montessori's approach to learning.

Candidates demonstrated a strong understanding of Montessori's approach to learning. They identified key principles including child-centred learning, independence, exploration, hands-on activities, freedom of choice, repetition, and creating an enabling environment. The responses also recognised the importance of respecting each child's individual pace and supporting confidence, cognitive development, and social skills. Responses were often detailed and reflected on work-based experiences. To strengthen the responses further, candidates could include more specific examples of Montessori activities and resources to show how the approach is applied in practice. Candidates showed a very good understanding of Montessori's approach and how it supports children's learning and development.

(b) Consider how her ideas can bring about positive change to current practice

The candidates demonstrated an understanding of how Montessori's ideas can create positive change in current practice.

They identified key principles such as child-centred learning, independence, active learning, choice, self-directed learning, and creating an environment that supports children's individual needs.

Some responses would benefit from more explanation of how Montessori principles can improve children's experiences, development, and learning in practice. Candidates should make clearer links between the approach and positive changes to current practice. The candidates showed a good awareness of Montessori's approach. More detailed explanation and links to practical examples would strengthen responses and support higher marks.

Q.11 Children attending early years programmes like Flying Start can experience a wide range of benefits.

Examine the benefits of engaging in the Flying Start programme for children, families, and carers.

The candidates demonstrated a strong understanding of the benefits of the Flying Start programme. They identified support for children's development, language skills, confidence, social skills, learning, and well-being. They also recognised the benefits for families and carers through childcare, health visitor support, family support, and guidance. Responses could include more explanation of how these services improve outcomes for children and support families in practice. Candidates provided detailed responses and showed a good understanding of how Flying Start supports children, families, and carers.

CHILDREN'S CARE, PLAY, LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT: PRACTICE AND THEORY

Level 3

Summer 2026

UNIT 331: INVESTIGATING CURRENT ISSUES IN CHILDREN'S CARE, PLAY, LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IN WALES

Overview of the Unit

Extended Investigation

The extended investigation of current issues in children's care, play, learning and development in Wales requires learners to investigate a contemporary issue for the sector selecting one of the following topics to research:

Comments on individual questions/sections

- Most candidates chose Topic 1: Current and contemporary factors affect the health and well-being of children. Research a range of current and contemporary factors and their impact on development.
- Many candidates were able to discuss the impact of current and contemporary factors on children's development, drawing on their knowledge and understanding from taught content within Unit 330 Topic 1. Candidates generally produced well-rounded research investigations covering a broad range of current and contemporary factors, including changes to family structure, financial circumstances, mental health, social media, additional learning needs, self-image, and the role of young carers. Many higher-level responses demonstrated a more personal approach to the task, and effectively related theory to practical experience and professional practice. These responses were clearly structured, focused on the required evidence areas, and demonstrated a strong understanding of the expectations of the investigation.
- A smaller number of candidates chose Topic 2: The statutory curriculum framework in Wales is used to inform planning to ensure children's holistic development in practice. Research the value of implementing engaging activities to support holistic development in children.
- Candidates selecting this topic demonstrated knowledge and understanding of how the statutory curriculum framework in Wales informs planning to support children's holistic development. Stronger investigations explored the value of implementing engaging, child-centred activities through experiential learning, play-based learning, and hands-on experiences, making effective links to the Curriculum for Wales and to theory from Unit 330 Topic 5. Candidates were able to relate these principles to practice within childcare settings, explaining how engaging activities support children's physical, cognitive, emotional, social, and language development.
- Candidates generally produced well-rounded research investigations across both topics, demonstrating sound knowledge and understanding supported by a range of relevant examples. Higher-achieving responses showed greater depth of analysis, effectively evaluating research and making meaningful links between theory, workplace practice, and personal experience.

- There were clear variations in the depth of research presented, and the sources used to support the work were not always identified through a reference list. Overall, responses demonstrated sound knowledge and detailed understanding of the chosen topic. The quality of writing reflected varied and informed perspectives on workplace practice, with many candidates successfully relating theoretical concepts to professional experiences.
- These differences were reflected in the grades awarded, with variation in the level of research undertaken and inconsistent use of referenced sources. While many responses demonstrated strong knowledge and clear understanding of the chosen topic, the depth of investigation and ability to effectively evidence findings influenced overall performance. Candidates who clearly linked workplace practice to professional experience and supported their responses with relevant research achieved higher grades.
- Centre-based focus areas were evident across the marking, with many candidates completing tasks closely aligned to centre guidance and class activities. This approach limited opportunities for candidates to demonstrate independent choice within their investigations. The Unit 331 investigation is intended to be based on an individual candidate's selection of a focus within the chosen topic area, informed by their own research. Candidates should be encouraged to express personal viewpoints, critical reflections, and informed considerations while drawing on practical experiences, allowing greater independence in the choice of focus and approach.
- The examination marking process requires a clear and consistent structure to support accurate application of the mark scheme and clear differentiation across mark boundaries. These remain important areas for future teaching and learning. The following key areas will support the clarity and effectiveness of the extended investigation and enable candidates to access the full range of marks available.

PE examiner feedback

- Title and topic choice should be clearly indicated on the first page of the paper to ensure clarity of the task boundaries.
- Candidate centre number, candidate number and page numbers must be included on every page submitted.
- Word documents are required to be uploaded by centres rather than PDF documents.
- Time allocation sheets must be completed and signed for each individual candidate.
- Break times must be accounted for on the timesheet.
- Timesheets need to be completed as stated and totalled with the overall number of hours.
- Tasks 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 must be clearly labelled to identify task boundaries. Work cannot be marked without clear task identification.
- The topic focus area is central to the whole investigation. The assessment paper is marked as a whole and each task must consistently link to the chosen topic.
- Examination questions should not be altered.
- Candidates need to avoid the use of tables and bullet points.
- Proformas should be avoided. The Unit 331 examination paper is the main source of guidance for successful completion.
- Simplified proformas with alternative questions should be avoided, as evidence areas are often omitted.
- Centres should allow for individuality in the completion of the investigation.
- Candidates should only select areas of discussion they are able to explore effectively as an individual choice rather than following a centre-directed choice.
- Candidates should choose a small number of focus areas within their chosen topic that are specific and realistic to investigate within the permitted word count.

- Tasks should be written from the candidate's perspective and in the first person, describing experiences, views and reflections where appropriate.
- The use of AI is not permitted as a valid source or reference for research.
- The use of the internet is not permitted during the NEA examination.
- Candidates cannot include links for further information, surveys or questionnaires, as these fall outside the boundaries of the mark scheme. Any information obtained through research should be discussed within the set tasks.
- Discussions of laws, legislation and frameworks must relate to Wales and be referenced appropriately.
- Online sources should be referenced appropriately.
- The Harvard referencing style is the appropriate method for referencing.
- Reference lists should be provided at the end of the completed investigation.
- Presenting material copied directly from books or other sources without acknowledgement will be left unmarked.
- Observe the evidence requirements carefully, including the emboldened 'must include' and 'could include' statements, to ensure comprehensive coverage of the mark scheme.
- Word count should be stated clearly, excluding the reference list and bibliography.
- The investigation must not exceed 5,500 words. Content exceeding this limit will not be marked.

Overview of the Unit

Topic - 1

Early intervention and assessments are used to promote learning, health and well-being. Research the value of health and education-based services that support early intervention.

Topic - 2

Actions, attitudes and experiences inside and outside the home can impact on a child's behaviour.

Research a range of factors that can impact on a child's behaviour.

Tasks

Comments on tasks/questions relating to candidate performance/meeting assessment criteria

Task 1

Write an introduction to your extended investigation.

Outline:

- the main focus; areas you have chosen to research in relation to your selected topic
- why you have selected the topic and the focus areas; you may wish to refer to personal interest, taught content, sector engagement and work placement the methods of research that you have used
- sources used as part of investigating the topic and focus areas.

This task requires a focused introduction to the whole extended investigation. Focus areas should be clearly identified and central to chosen topic. One or two focus area should be identified with reasons for choice which may be based on personal/practical experiences within a work setting or learning environment which have raised interest and awareness to prompt further investigation. The focus areas need to be limited to ensure that the specific focus areas can be considered and evaluated thoroughly through the varied method of research involved through the whole process. Stating the evidence of research and chosen reading should be clearly identified.

For topic 1 stronger candidates produced clear and focused introductions that identified relevant research areas, such as educational assessments, health services, and multi-agency support for early intervention. For topic 2 stronger candidates produced focused introductions that clearly identified the factors they intended to investigate, such as parenting styles, family relationships, peer influence, school environment, social media, trauma, and socioeconomic circumstances. Many highlighted their topic choices clearly through using personal interest, taught content, or work placement experiences and outlined appropriate research methods and reliable sources. These responses demonstrated good planning, academic writing, and a clear direction for the investigation.

Some candidates often gave brief or general introductions with limited detail about their chosen focus areas. Justifications for selecting the topic were underdeveloped, research methods lacked explanation, and sources were often vague or unreliable. These responses tended to be descriptive rather than analytical, making it difficult to understand the purpose and scope of the investigation.

Overall, higher marks were awarded to candidates who clearly explained what they would research, why it was important, and how they would gather and evaluate information.

Task 2

Discuss how your selected topic and focus areas support children's care, play, learning and development.

Your evidence **must** include:

- how the focus areas support (positively or negatively) children's care, play learning and development
- a variety of viewpoints including your own and/or those of others
- appropriate examples from theory and/or practice to support your discussion
- how relevant theory/legislation or frameworks (as appropriate) have impacted on the topic and focus areas
- traceable references or quotes to support evidence.

Candidates are required to show an understanding of theory/frameworks or legislation in relation to focus areas and apply this to practice. Positive and/or negative points should be considered as well as their own viewpoint with consideration to the thoughts of others, this might include work placement and practice observed during work placement experience which can be used to support viewpoints. Include appropriate and relevant theory, legislation or frameworks which will support the discussion. Candidates need to include effective use of relevant referencing.

For topic 1 stronger candidates provided a balanced discussion of how health and education-based services support children's care, play, learning and development For topic 2 stronger candidates critically discussed how factors such as parenting styles, family relationships, peer influence, school environment, trauma, and social media can positively and negatively affect a child's behaviour. They explored both positive and negative impacts, included a range of viewpoints, applied relevant theories, legislation and frameworks, and supported their arguments with practical examples and traceable references.

For topic 1 weaker candidates tended to be descriptive, focusing mainly on explaining services rather than evaluating their effectiveness For topic 2 weaker candidates tended to describe factors affecting behaviour rather than evaluate their impact. They often included limited viewpoints, weak links to theory and legislation, few practical examples, and insufficient referencing. Higher marks were awarded to responses that demonstrated critical analysis, supported arguments with evidence, and clearly linked early intervention services to children's outcomes for topic 1 and for topic 2 discussed factors to children's behaviour and development.

Task 3

Evaluate how the values and principles that underpin your selected topic and chosen focus areas are used in practice to support children's care, play, learning and development.

Your evidence **could** include reference to:

- effective communication
- teamwork and collaborative working
- equality/inclusion/diversity
- freedom to participate

- children's rights being upheld
- professional skills or any other as appropriate.

This task's focus is to evaluate a range of values and principles. Evaluation could be developed through knowledge gained as part of taught content and examples from practice. Candidates were able to consider a range of discussions relating to practice and included clear points to meet the list of evidence that could be included, such as the importance of effective communication, teamwork, and professional skills.

For topic 1 stronger candidates critically evaluated how values and principles such as effective communication, teamwork, inclusion, equality, children's rights, and professional practice support early intervention services. They used relevant examples and evidence to show how these principles improve children's care, play, learning, and development and were able to demonstrate how these approaches support positive behavioural outcomes and child development.

Although, some candidates mainly described values and principles without evaluating their effectiveness in practice. Responses often lacked evidence, practical examples, and critical analysis. Higher marks were awarded to candidates who clearly assessed the impact of these values and principles on practice and supported their evaluation with relevant evidence and examples.

Task 4

Consider how relevant theories, legislation or frameworks (as appropriate) have influenced practice in children's care, play, learning and development settings.

Evidence **must** include clear links to how the theories, legislation or frameworks have influenced practice in the settings you have experienced.

This task requires candidates to include links to the influences of relevant theory, legislation and or frameworks relating to Wales (as appropriate to the topic focus) could be considered; to show depth and breadth of understanding with reference to the strengths and weaknesses in practice. Evidence should be developed to make clear links to placement. Candidates must discuss how legislation, frameworks and or theoretical perspectives have influenced current practice and made changes to the practice in children's settings through providing an interpretation of their own experiences of the effects on professional practice.

For topic 1 many candidates effectively analysed how relevant theories, legislation, and frameworks influence practice in children's care, play, learning, and development settings in Wales. They made clear links between theories of child development and Welsh frameworks such as The Curriculum for Wales, The Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018. For topic 2 responses demonstrated a clear understanding of how theory and policy shape professional practice and improve outcomes for children.

Some candidates tended to describe theories, legislation, or frameworks without explaining how they influence day-to-day practice. Links to Welsh settings were often limited or unclear, and examples lacked detail or relevance. Higher marks were awarded to candidates who clearly connected theory, legislation, and frameworks to practical experiences and evaluated their impact on children's care, play, learning, and development.

Task 5

Assess how having knowledge of the selected topic and related theories and legislation can be used to bring about change in children's care, play, learning and development provision in the 21st century in Wales.

Your evidence **must**:

- demonstrate an awareness of new and developing practice approaches
- refer to a range of settings within the sector
- make judgements that link practice with theory (topic focus, related theories and legislation)
- make suggestions for future change that could be adopted in practice to support children's care, play, learning and development.

Evidence **must** refer to research undertaken and **must** relate to experiences in practice.

This task looks towards changes for the future based on the candidate's research and understanding of their chosen topic and focus areas. Candidates are required to consider the knowledge they have gained through the research of their topic and related focus areas and assess how the related theories and legislation can be used to bring about change in children's care, play, learning and development.

The majority of candidates demonstrated a good understanding of how early intervention and assessment support children's learning, health and well-being. For topic 1 relevant health and education services were identified, and there was some effective reference to Welsh legislation and practice. Strengths included recognising the importance of early identification of needs and the positive impact of multi-agency working. The response also showed awareness of how early intervention can improve outcomes for children. For topic 2 strengths included the use of relevant examples from practice and an awareness of how behaviour may be linked to wider social and emotional factors. The response showed some understanding of the importance of supporting children through positive relationships and appropriate interventions.

Candidates generally demonstrated a good understanding of the range of factors that can influence a child's behaviour, including family circumstances, parenting styles, peer relationships, life experiences and environmental influences. There was clear recognition that experiences both inside and outside the home can affect behaviour and emotional well-being. To improve, the candidate needed to include more detailed reference to research, theory and legislation to support their discussion. Greater analysis of how different factors impact behaviour and stronger links between theory and practice would have strengthened the response. More consideration of current approaches and recommendations for future practice would also have supported higher-level achievement.

Task 6

Discuss how your research and learning will support your own individual practice moving forward.

Your evidence must include:

- a reflection of the value or benefits of what you have learnt as part of investigating this topic and focus areas
- what you would like to do, based on your findings, to improve your own future practice

- reference to any impact changes to your own practice could have on the practice of others.

Candidates are required to reflect on their own personal learning of the topic and focus areas chosen. This reflection will bring together the varied discussions and viewpoints throughout the whole investigation. Candidates will be able to discuss the value or benefits of what they have learnt as part of investigating their chosen topic and focus areas.

Candidates can discuss what they would like to do based on their findings to enable a better understanding of practice with the aim of improving their own future practice.

Candidates will be required to refer to any impact changes will have to their own practice and the changes to the practice of others in the future.

For topic 1 candidates generally showed a good understanding of the importance of early intervention and assessment in supporting children's learning, health and well-being. They reflected on how their research had increased their knowledge and awareness of supporting children effectively. For topic 2 candidates demonstrated a good understanding of the factors that can impact a child's behaviour, including family relationships, parenting styles, peer influences and life experiences. Relevant examples were used to show how experiences both inside and outside the home can affect behaviour.

A strength of the response was identifying ways to improve future practice, such as using observations and assessments more effectively and working closely with other professionals. Candidates also recognised improvement in their own practice could have positive impacts on colleagues and the children they support. To improve, the candidate could have included more detail about what they learnt from their research and given clearer examples of how they would apply this learning in practice. More explanation of how these changes could influence the practice of others would have strengthened the response. Overall, this was a good reflective response, but more detail and evaluation were needed to achieve higher marks.

Supporting you

Useful contacts and links

Our friendly subject team is on hand to support you between 8.30am and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday.

Tel: 02922 404265

Email: ccpld@wjec.co.uk

Qualification webpage: <https://www.healthandcarelearning.wales/qualifications/>

See other useful contacts here: [Contact us | Health and Care Learning Wales](#)

CPD Training / Professional Learning

Access our popular, free online CPD/PL courses to receive exam feedback and put questions to our subject team, and attend one of our face-to-face events, focused on enhancing teaching and learning, providing practical classroom ideas and developing understanding of marking and assessment.

Please find details for all our courses here: [Upcoming Training and Events | Health and Care Learning Wales](#) <https://www.wjec.co.uk/home/professional-learning/>

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WJEC
245 Western Avenue
Cardiff CF5 2YX
Tel No 029 2026 5000
Fax 029 2057 5994
E-mail: exams@wjec.co.uk
website: www.wjec.co.uk