**Learning Aim C: Understand how children are empowered in early years settings**



***Topic C.1 The importance of empowerment of children in early years settings***

**P4 Explain why adults in early years settings seek to empower children.**

* You need to **explain** what is empowerment.
* You need to **explain** why adults in early years settings seek to empower children.
* You should use examples to support your explanation, which must include **why** settings seek to empower children and **how** children **benefit** from being empowered.

***Topic C.2 How adults in early years settings empower children***

**P5 Describe how adults in early years settings can empower children.**

* You are expected to **describe** **how** adults in early years settings can empower children.
* You should use examples that show how adults empower children for example, how a snack time in a setting for children aged three years up to five years is organised by the adults to enable the children to prepare the food for snack, set the table, choose when they have their snack and offer choices of food.
* You should then **describe** how this supports empowerment by; *involving children, supporting decision making, encouraging choices and supporting independence and self-care.*
* You must use examples from settings for children of different ages.

**M3 Explain how effective empowerment of children can benefit their development, using appropriate examples.**

* You need to **explain** **how** effective empowerment of children can **benefit** their **development**.
* Use a case study to provide appropriate examples.
* **Explain** how the setting empowers children in ways appropriate to their **age/stage** of development.

**D3 Assess the extent to which an early years setting is successful in empowering children, using a case study.**

* You are expected to **make a judgement** about how successful an early years setting has been in empowering children and why their approaches have been successful in ensuring children are involved in decisions that affect them.

In order to complete this assignment, you are to produce a **newspaper article**.

**EMPOWERMENT**

To complete this assignment, we first must consider why early years settings will empower children.

**Empowerment** is providing children involvement in decisions that affect them, this must reflect their age/ stage of development and their understanding.

Children must be given opportunities to make choices and begin taking responsibility for themselves if they are to grow into confident and active people. Early years setting must therefore find ways of helping children to make choices for themselves or even be involved in decisions as part of the everyday running of the setting. For example, children should be given the opportunity to choose what they may like to do that day, what they would like to eat and drink (within reason!) This is empowerment.

Adults must carefully judge how they empower children. Children can only make decisions if they understand the consequences of those decisions and know what they different options may actually be. These decisions must be age appropriate- children cannot decide to only wear their nappy in the winter or eat chocolate at all mealtimes.

Examples of **empowerment..**



**Think** about all the decisions you have made today… how would you feel if all these decisions had been made for you?

**Children’s rights**

**Write** down as many rights you can remember that children have……



* The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child gives all children the right to be informed and consulted. These are just two of many rights.
* Article 12 – Respect for the views of the child:

**Every child has the right to say what they think in all matters affecting them, and to have their views taken seriously.**

* Article 13 – Freedom of expression:

**Every child must be free to say what they think and to seek and receive all kinds of information, as long as it is within the law.**

**Scenarios**

In pairs discuss the following scenarios

* A child needs a simple operation for some dental work, should a young child be allowed to give consent to an operation?
* What if the operation was more serious?
* Should a young child be consulted about treatment?

**Why early years settings empower children**

Why do you think it is important for early years settings to empower children?

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| --- | --- |
| *Reasons why children should be empowered* | *Explanation* |
|  | * Children have the right to… * Therefore all settings should … * The decisions and choices children can make must be… |
|  | * Empowering children shows .. * It is a way of showing.. * *For example, waiting for a baby to be ready before cleaning his face is a way of showing that he is valued, even though his is not yet talking or making decisions.* * Asking children … |
|  | * The way you are treated as a child affects…. * When children are in empowering settings, they learn… * This helps them to have confidence in their … * If they see adults empowering other children in the same way they are also more likely to …. * Adults should therefore act as.. |
|  | * When children are empowered, it can also help …. * Children who have been involved in the …      * The setting will be a **happier place** and it will run a lot **smoother** |

**CASE STUDY**

Happy Lions staff realised one day that their main ‘customers’ were really children. This made them start to think about how they could find ways of meeting the children’s wishes. Some of the staff thought that this would not be possible as they setting included babies. After some training, they realised that, in all sorts of small ways even babies could make decisions or be supported to make their wishes clear.

Staff began to notice babies’ reactions to toys and activities and used this information to plan. They made a photo album of resources so that toddlers who were not yet speaking could communicate to staff what they wanted to play with, by pointing. After a few months staff found that children were actually quite good at making decisions. The children also appeared happier.

1. What skills were the children gaining from being consulted more?
2. Why might being more involved in decision making help children feel happy?
3. In what other ways could the nursery help the children make more decisions?

**How empowerment benefits children**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Developments** | **Explanations** |
| **Emotional development** | * Children develop a strong sense of ……. * Empowerment helps children to manage their own behaviour. * If they are involved in setting the boundaries of good and bad behaviour or talking through …… |
| **Physical development** | * If children are making decisions about what to play with, they are more likely…. * Children also learn about weighing up ……. |
| **Social development** | * Children who feel **valued** are more likely to show…. * Empowering children also helps them to understand the **importance** of recognising …. |
| **Cognitive development** | * Children are more likely to …. and .... if they have been involved in ………….. * Concentration is important for l**earning** * Children will also develop …… |

**STUDENT GUIDANCE**

**What must I do?**

You must ensure that you explain **why** adults in early years settings seek to empower children, this includes:

* *children have a right to be informed, involved and consulted about all decisions that affect them*
* *to value children as their feelings and opinions are taken into account*
* *to show respect to children*
* *to help children to respect themselves and others*
* *to involve children in decision making, e.g. play opportunities, routines.*

You must use examples to support your explanation, which must include **why** settings seek to empower children.

You must also explain **how** children benefit from being empowered, this includes;

* *Physical development* e.g. children gain confidence to try new challenges, more motivated to practise skills, helps children to make decisions about risk
* *Emotional development* e.g. self-esteem encouraged from being given opportunities to be involved in decision-making processes, more likely to be able to manage own behaviour if they have had some input in decisions about appropriate behaviour, boundaries and expectations
* *Social development* e.g. children develop self-respect and learn to respect and value others and the feelings of others
* *Cognitive development eg.* involvement in decision-making process encourages motivation, perseverance and concentration.

**Benefits of empowerment**

Early years settings are aware that there are many developmental benefits associated with empowering children.

Adults must seek to empower children in their day-to-day activities. This is important for their overall development.

1. In small groups of three or four, read each of the scenarios below.

Scenario 1

| CPLD0513_003_FA_A | At Midtown School, children in Year 1 are encouraged to discuss art projects before they start their work. There are a range of activities, tools and materials available to them. They often take part in group activities so each child must decide how they will contribute to the project. Children are expected to choose the resources they need. Resources are organised in boxes on shelves near the art tables and are clearly labelled. At the end of each session, children are expected to tidy up the area. Children are then given the opportunity to show and discuss their project work. |
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Scenario 2

| CPLD0513_004_FA_A | At Greenfields Nursery, children aged 3–4 years are encouraged to be independent at dinner time. Before dinner, they are taken to the toilet area where they use the toilet independently (there is a half door so that they have some privacy while being supervised). They are encouraged to wash and dry their hands themselves.  Children sit in small groups with an adult at the table. Food is placed into serving dishes. Children help themselves to food and pass dishes around to their friends. They also pour water from a jug into their cups. The adult gives them information about the food to encourage them to make good choices. |
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Scenario 3

| CPLD0513_005_FA_A | Children attending Tiddlers Playgroup are aged 12 months to 2½ years. As the children arrive, they are greeted by an adult. The adult shows them the range of activities that are set out so they can choose what to do. There is a visual timetable on the wall. Adults use the pictures to show children what will happen next, such as snack time or outdoor play time. When adults carry out personal care, they tell children what they are going to do – for instance ‘Let’s take off your wet nappy, I’m going to put cream on your bottom to make it feel better’ or ‘Do you want to use the potty now?’. Adults are sensitive to children’s personal needs. When children are able to do so, they are encouraged to go to the toilet independently. |
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1. For each of the scenarios, **complete** the table below to show the benefits of empowerment for children on each of the areas of development. Remember to consider the age and stage of development of children in each scenario.

| Benefits of empowerment | Scenario 1: Midtown School | Scenario 2: Greenfields Nursery | Scenario 3: Tiddlers Playgroup |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Physical development |  |  |  |
| Emotional development |  |  |  |
| Social development |  |  |  |
| Cognitive development |  |  |  |