

The Impact of Teachers in Early Years - Professional Identity and Agency Webinar 30th November 20. Key points from the Early Primary Practitioner Discussion, led by Michelle Davenport.

Q. How do you organise the set up of groups to facilitate both direct teaching and independent working?

Michelle answered:

- We have two rooms. One playroom, one for formal work.
- Three times a day, children come onto the carpet area. Otherwise, the children are in mixed ability groups.
- The play is free flow playing.
- They chose their own time to complete four by Friday; this allows for the children to manage their own learning.

Q. Do you have any suggestions for those of us who have everyone in one class with no support staff. Free play happening around you as you try to teach can get very noisy!

Michelle answered:

What I found worked well was to use technology and film on an iPad to show/share work. It does get noisy, but it does get easier as you do it.

Q. How would you compare this play approach in P1 compared to a more 'traditional' one? What are the benefits/challenges?

Michelle answered:

We start with a baseline assessment when the children first come in P1. We often create our own assessment. However, our phonics assessment come from an outside source.

The play encourages independence and creativity. It does get noisy when it is all in one room. You also will find you have to change the classroom around a lot, so the children do not get bored quickly.

Q. When you observe the children playing do you record your observations anywhere formally? Do you set a certain time of day/week to observe different children?

Michelle answered:

We have purchased [‘Seesaw’](#) and are trying it out to see how it works so everything is in one space. As a teacher I try and take a few hours twice a week to observe the children and add it into ‘Seesaw’.