



THE ARCHETYPE APPROACH / PRACTITIONER IMPACT CASE STUDY

AA-CS-012

Seeing the Child Before the Expectation

How a Shift in Perception Changed Planning, Confidence and Team Reflection

CASE TYPE	Practitioner Development & Perception Shift
ROLE / CONTEXT	Practitioner - 1+ years using The Archetype Approach
REVIEW DATE	Practitioner review completed 02/06/2026
PRACTICE SITE	Children of Towan Kindergarten
SOURCE	Anonymised practitioner review

EMERGING AA PRINCIPLE

Perception can change practice before practice changes behaviour.

OBSERVE

What was being noticed?

RECOGNISE

What shifted in perception?

BALANCE

What changed in practice?

INTEGRATE

What became available?

Observe -> Recognise -> Balance -> Integrate

What was being noticed?

The practitioner position and reported impact



INITIAL POSITION

An experienced practitioner who had used The Archetype Approach for more than a year described the framework and its language as easy to understand and apply. The practitioner strongly endorsed its usefulness for understanding children's behaviour and reported that it had changed how they responded in practice.

RECURRING REPORTED PATTERNS

- A strong interest in understanding children beyond what they can or cannot yet do
- Increased attention to confidence, need and participation rather than performance alone
- Use of the framework to inform activity planning
- Growing confidence when supporting children
- Strong engagement with reflective team practice

PRACTICE AND CHILD-IMPACT EVIDENCE

The review linked the approach with improvements across several child-impact areas. The clearest individual example offered was supporting a child to build confidence in physical ability. The practitioner also reported positive movement in transitions, confidence and peer relationships, with some improvement in regulation, participation, communication, independence and emotional expression.

CONTEXTS WHERE THE LENS MATTERED

- Situations where developmental expectations could dominate interpretation
- Children whose confidence affected access to learning or participation
- Behaviour that could be read only at surface level
- Planning decisions that benefited from a clearer understanding of individual need

WHAT WAS THE PRACTITIONER SHOWING US?

The practitioner was not asking for more techniques. They were describing a change in what became visible: the child as a whole person rather than a list of abilities, difficulties or expectations.

What shifted in perception?

Seeing the practice beneath the response



PRIMARY PRACTICE SHIFT

Capability / expectation -> whole-child understanding

SUPPORTING SHIFT

Observation -> more responsive planning

BRIDGING FUNCTION

Archetype language as a practical reflective lens

PRACTICE TENSION / RISK

A common practice risk is to let developmental expectations become the main lens through which a child is seen. In the review, the significant shift was away from judging children primarily through capability and towards asking who the child is, what they need and what conditions help them participate.

WHAT THE PRACTITIONER NEEDED FROM THE FRAMEWORK

- A shared language for discussing patterns without fixing children into labels
- Time to observe before deciding what behaviour means
- Planning that grows from individual strengths and needs
- Confidence to adapt expectations without lowering regard for the child
- A reflective team culture that keeps interpretation open to revision

PRACTICE UNDERSTANDING

The review suggests that the framework was useful because it connected observation with planning. Understanding the child differently changed what the practitioner chose to offer, including activities intended to build physical confidence.

PERCEPTION SHIFT

The key perception shift was captured by the practitioner: 'It has helped me see the children for who they are, rather than what they can and can't do.'

What changed in practice?

Keeping professional judgement - widening the lens



PRACTITIONER APPROACH

- Pause before interpreting behaviour through ability or expectation alone.
- Use archetypal patterns as prompts for observation rather than labels.
- Plan from the child's current strengths, confidence and needs.
- Reflect on adult responses as part of the situation, not outside it.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND PRACTICE ADJUSTMENTS

- Confidence-building physical experiences
- Activities adapted around observed needs
- Team discussion around patterns and possible supports
- Consistent adult responses
- Reduced reliance on quick labels when behaviour is difficult to understand

BALANCING RELATIONSHIP

Expectation -> Perception -> Adaptation

The framework became a bridge between noticing and doing. The practitioner described greater clarity about children, increased confidence and more purposeful planning.

REFLECTIVE SEQUENCE

Notice -> Understand -> Plan -> Respond

The aim was not to abandon developmental expectations. It was to stop expectations becoming the only thing adults could see.

What became newly available?

Reported growth in practice, relationships and response



REPORTED CHANGE

The practitioner reported a significant change in behavioural responses, stronger confidence when supporting children and greater reflection on their own practice. Team reflection, staff consistency and relationships with children were all reported as improved.

WHAT BECAME VISIBLE

- Stronger confidence in planning and supporting children
- Greater emphasis on understanding need before responding
- Improved team reflection and consistency
- Improved relationships with children
- A more positive emotional climate and stronger shared understanding of behaviour
- Recognition of potential value for SEND, inclusion, attachment and staff wellbeing

WHAT EMERGED OVER TIME?

The review describes a practitioner becoming more confident not because the framework supplied a fixed response, but because it offered a clearer way to think. The practitioner also identified further SEND development as an important next step for the model.

INTEGRATION

Seeing the child more fully changed what the practitioner planned, noticed and felt able to offer.

Seeing the Child Before the Expectation

Practice can become more responsive when developmental expectations remain available without becoming the whole story. In this review, the strongest reported change was perceptual: children were increasingly understood through who they were and what they needed, not only through what they could or could not yet do.

AA SNAPSHOT

PRIMARY PRACTICE SHIFT

Expectation -> whole-child understanding

REPORTED PRACTITIONER IMPACT

Significant change in behaviour response; increased confidence and reflection

TEAM IMPACT

Reflection, consistency and relationships improved

CASE CATEGORY

Practitioner Development & Perception Shift

SUPPORTING SHIFT

Observation -> responsive planning

REPORTED CHILD EXAMPLE

Building confidence in physical ability

SEND POSITION

Useful, with further development requested

EVIDENCE SOURCE

Signed implementation review - June 2026

CLOSING REFLECTION

“When adults widen what they see, children are given more ways to be understood.”

AA TAGS

Practitioner Development

Perception Shift

Reflective Practice

Planning

Confidence

Whole-Child Understanding

Reduced Labelling

Team Culture

SEND Potential

Behaviour Understanding

AA EVIDENCE THEMES

- Perception can change practice
- Understanding can shape planning
- Practitioner confidence can grow through clearer interpretation
- Team reflection supports consistency
- Children can be seen beyond capability measures
- Further SEND development is an identified need

AA DEVELOPMENTAL REFLECTION | EVIDENCE STRENGTH: 4.5 / 5

This is a strong practitioner-impact case because the review links perception, planning, confidence and team culture in one account. Its clearest limitation is that it remains self-reported evidence from one practitioner. The most valuable next step is to compare this pattern across further reviews and link it to dated child observations where possible.