

Every child matters

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BC531 Curriculum and Every Child Matters: Developments, changes and challenges The impact of 'Every Child Matters' on classroom practice This report will demonstrate how the outcomes of Every Child Matters (ECM) agenda can be implemented into classroom practise when planning and teaching the broad curriculum. There will be a focus on 'Stay Safe' and 'Be Healthy' in the subject areas of Design Technology (D. T), Physical Education (P. E) and Citizenship. What is Every Child Matters? 'Every Child Matters' was first published as a government Green Paper in 2003. It was made in response to a report chaired by Lord Laming into the death of Victoria Climbié. The Green Paper set out proposals for addressing concerns recognised in the report, and a range of situations that happened in families and the impact it had on the lives of children and young people. There was wide consultation with people working in children's services, and with parents, children and young people. Following this, the Government published Every Child Matters: the Next Steps, and passed the Children Act 2004, providing the legislation necessary for developing more effective and accessible services focused around the needs of children, young people and families. Every Child Matters: Change for Children was published in November 2004. The outcomes that were put forward from the paper are for every child, whatever background or circumstance. They are that they need to, be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic well-being. It also required organisations involved with providing services to children, coming together in new ways, sharing information and working together. This will enable them all to protect children and young people from harm and help them achieve what they want

in life. Since the Coalition Government took power in the UK in May 2010 there has been a lack of information in relation to the place of the Every Child Matters agenda. The current position of ECM is that, an article from 'Children and Young People Now' reported that 'an internal Department for Education (DfE) memo was advising that DfE preferred terminology is to replace the phrase 'Every Child Matters' and 'the five outcomes' with 'help children achieve more'. ' (Puffett, 2010) From this we can see that even though the terminology of Every Child Matters is in position for changing the whole policy and what it stands for is still remains. A DfE spokesperson talks about how the change of terminology does not mean that there will also be a change of direction in terms of the policy 'There is no lack of focus on Every Child Matters...The coalition created the new DfE to carry through radical reforms in schools, early years and child protection.' (Puffett, 2010) Role of the school and teacher 'ECM is an agenda that pervades every aspect of school life' (Spender, 2006). This shows the role of the school and teachers are important in implementing the agenda into the lives of young people. They must make sure provisions are available for pupils to meet the 5 outcomes. Teachers have the responsibilities to minimise any barriers to effective learning, 'teaching and learning unlock the potential of every child and must continue to be the core in ECM' (Hofkins 2008, pg. 19) and teachers must always plan lessons to meet the ability and needs of each child so that they can achieve to that potential. For example, differentiating work effectively so that each child in class is challenged. Schools and teachers have a wider responsibility than just delivering the curriculum, 'ECM is intended to change the way schools think about their pupils — more as

people in the round, less as learning machines' (Hofkins 2008, pg. 9) so schools could provide extracurricular activities, advice on health and careers and possibly set up different awareness weeks e. g. anti-bullying. From school practice I have seen the use of career conventions coming into school to give advice on as very effective. This is mainly because it gave pupils the freedom to pick and choose which career field they were interested in and the options available to them. From discussions I found that students came away with great advice and resourceful contacts had they wished to further enquire into their choice. Teachers in their pastoral roles can further help students achieve the outcomes. They need to promote and safeguard the health, welfare and safety of pupils. Teachers should offer advice and support to pupils in education related issues. By maintaining a working partnership with parents, support staff and other professionals teachers can allow for smooth changes between personnel if needed. Physical Education (P. E) ' P. E is the most suitable vehicle for the promotion of active, healthy lifestyles among young people.' (Cale, 2009 pg. 401), so it is the ideal subject in promoting the outcome ' Be Healthy'. This outcome does not just require the pupils just to be physically healthy but also mentally and emotionally. P. E caters for all these needs as it provides a base to them all. For example when doing circuit training, it is physically demanding but it allows pupils to build fitness and gives an opportunity for teachers to explain how healthy diets can further help improve fitness and recovery. This allows pupils to learn about healthier lifestyles and understand how physical activity can improve their lives. Taking part in ball games for example rugby, they learn to follow rules, play fair and behave positively. By controlling emotions

and negotiating with their team-mates shows how P. E can ‘ promote their social, emotional, cognitive and linguistic development (Bailey, 2006 pg. 397), thus allowing pupils to be both mentally and emotionally healthy. ‘ Safety is arguably the most important factor in planning a P. E lesson’ (Capel, 2002 pg. 115), In P. E lessons there are a wide range of equipment and actions which if not used or attempted sensibly, could cause injury. So it is therefore the teachers’ role to show how to use equipment properly and allows opportunities for students to showcase their knowledge in safety. For example in gymnastics pupils have to consider safety issues when planning a routine. So they have to consider the space they have, where they will be landing, where to place their apparatus. They will also need to know where all the other groups are as well. This shows a care for their own safety and the safety of their peers’ . Thus linking to the outcome ‘ Stay Safe’. Also another way of meeting the outcome is allowing for a pupil led warm-up/cool down session, this ensures pupils know how to keep their muscles safe from pulls or strains. With it being pupil led it allows teachers to see if there are any misconceptions or errors when stretching to further help each student be safe. Design Technology (D. T) The practical work that is part of Design Technology means that teachers and schools must have the outcome ‘ Stay Safe’ in their sight. They will have to ensure that there is a safe environment for the pupils to work in, both physically and emotionally. Pupils need to be shown how to safely use tools and about the safety within the workshops (in secondary schools). Teachers’ modelling the correct use of tools is a must and having clear procedures in place, for example on how to collect tools/materials is vital too. Using observation in D. T lessons allows teachers

not only to access what levels pupils are working on but if they are following procedure properly and using tools correctly. Teachers need to plan ‘ activities that give children a chance to practise and apply their skills’ (DATA, 2008), so by having a scenario based project it gives them that chance. In schools for example you can have a project where older pupils have to design a playground climbing frame for the younger pupils. This gives them set criteria which they have to follow. They will have to ensure it is fit for purpose, it uses the right materials to guard against accidental injury and ensures all health and safety requirements are incorporated within the design. A project like this in D. T shows how the design process will involve pupils thinking about their safety and safety of the users when coming up with suitable ideas. Also when making prototypes it allows teachers to see if pupils are using tools and following rules correctly. ‘ To be healthy, pupils need to learn the importance of eating sensibly’ (Great Britain. Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, 2008), D. T, especially the Food Technology element is vital in meeting the ‘ Be Healthy’ outcome. It helps pupils to consider the relationship between food and health, for example in lessons they can look at the nutritional values in products and make meals that are healthy or they can compare different dishes to see which is low in calories. Another proactive way of meeting this outcome is allowing the students to come up with menus for the school lunch. A project like this will have the pupils looking at different food types, making surveys to see what style of food is popular in the school and checking if there are any special dietary requirements within the school that might affect their menu. This type of project helps meet most of the other outcomes as well. Citizenship ‘

Citizenship is at the heart of the ECM agenda' (Citizenship News, 2008)

Citizenship is vital in supporting the agenda and it can make a significant contribution to promoting access to the most of the ideas behind it. Out of all the subjects in the curriculum citizenship does provide the best scope for ECM in practice. Citizenship is an excellent lesson that allows for discussions amongst peers on subjects that affect them all. It enables all pupils to express and share their own views and ideas both to the whole class and in small groups within a classroom that embraces a safe environment for learning. For example a discussion on bullying allows pupils to discuss behaviour deemed as bad and what behaviour is deemed a good. 'Citizenship promotes safety especially through its emphasis on cohesion.'

(How does citizenship support the Every Child Matters outcomes, 2012), so for example if afterwards they can make an anti-bullying policy together, it brings the whole class as one and promotes the outcomes 'Be Safe' and 'Be Healthy'. Citizenship is also provides the basis for school to cover topics such as drug abuse and alcohol use. It also allows for the discussion of sexual health as well, these topics are important in meeting the outcome of 'Be Healthy'. On my teaching practice, I saw a teacher use real life examples and articles on such topics. For example when looking at the effects of smoking the pupils were shown the rate of deaths related to smoking and the effect it has. They then produced leaflets and posters warning people about the effects of smoking and how it harms the human body. By doing this it shows that they know how to 'Be Healthy' and also means they are making a 'positive contribution' as they are promoting a healthier lifestyle for others. 'Learning cannot take place effectively if a child or young person does not

feel safe or when health problems create barriers to their learning’ (Chemnais, 2009 pg. 1) ECM allows for issues like these to be addressed, as the five outcomes are there for guidance to ensure problems like these do not occur. The ECM agenda in schools gives teacher the chance to teach and pupils the chance to learn. The 5 outcomes work together to essentially make every child matter, so for example when planning lessons the outcomes act as a checklist with teachers checking to see if their lessons are enjoyable, if students are safe and so forth. The ECM agenda has a positive outcome in classroom practice and the school as a whole. Word Count: 1549

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