Pgce. managing the learning process

??? Young people today think of nothing but themselves.

They have no reverence for parents or old age??™. Peter the Hermit.(1274.

)[cited in Watkins 2008]Every Child Matters (ECM; HM government 2003) identified the need to look after the well being of children up to 19 years of age. There are five key outcomes including Being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and economic well being. The green paper Youth Matters (2005) was a development of ECM aiming for post-compulsory providers to raise young people??™s aspirations and help them to achieve and feel positive towards learning. Every student deserves the best education possible. Some students are highly motivated, ready to contribute to lessons and willing to apply themselves but often the desire to learn may need inspiring and a lack of self discipline may be evident. Cowley (2001) feels that some students (especially in Further Education when they may lack structure in their home lives) need boundaries and structure to give them a feeling of solidarity and may feel the need to test adults to see how far these boundaries can be stretched. New and student teachers can easily be discouraged when students are unwilling to participate and decide to disrupt lessons.

Engaging all students is vital to keep the classroom as a teaching environment and not a disciplinary one. Jaques and Salmon (2007) (cited in Avis, 2010) suggested that many incidents are due to lack of structure in sessions. A transition between activities allows learners to pursue their own agenda. Challenging behaviour can indicate boredom and it can also be a signal that learners are not placed on the right course or the level of learning

is not appropriate. Consequently their behaviour amuses others and encourages ??? herd??™ behaviour. After being given a class of 16/17 year olds to teach for a 2 hour session with only 10 minutes notice and instruction to ??? help them with their case studies??™ laptop computers were provided for each student and clear instructions of NO phones out on the desk and NO Face book or shopping sites on the computers.

A few were compliant and motivated because they required a ??? distinction??™ grade for this particular piece of work and worked diligently asking pertinent questions. A few others decided to test the boundaries of the new teacher by looking at photographs on their phones, gossiping, looking at shopping websites on the laptops, one particular student decided to use her mobile phone to ring a salon and rent a sun bed. At the time fears of reprisal stopped any dialog between students and teacher but on reflection the students should have been told immediately to put their phones away and if there had been reprisals been told to leave the classroom and await instruction outside the door then been issued with a cause for concern and their course tutor informed. Weigle (1995) (Cited in Eves. 2001) found that when student teachers were faced with disruptive behaviour they couldn??™t identify which interventions would be effective and which would just exacerbate behaviour. In 1997 Weigle went on to say that controlling disruptive behaviour in the classroom was (and still is) one of teachers greatest challenges. This is also supported by Merrett and Wheldall, (1993), and Smylie, (1989).

Many students come to college with a great deal of emotional baggage. Some are neglected at home, some are being sexually abused, a few have

been forced to leave their homes and live with relatives, many are even single parents at 16 yrs old. As teachers, we desire the students to be willing to learn, but realistically some of them just don??™t want to or know how to learn and acting out is their escape. De Spirt (2007)Maslow??™s hierarchy of needs (1943) [cited in Petty 2004] looked at the persons willingness to accept and participate in their environment and this relies on the persons own self concept and related levels of motivation or self actualisation.

Maslow believed that self actualisation was a human need that could only be met when other levels of attainment had been met. Motivation (or lack of it) can arise from many sources and situations. Involving the students in their own learning should make them feel more comfortable and more likely to succeed. Very few students wish to remain anonymous and most students like to make others aware of their interests, experiences and needs and also wish to know about their peers. This can promote a feeling of safety within the group dynamics and given that a group has more potential for achievement than an individual it is important that any achievements are monitored. Individuals should not become so overwhelmed by more dominant members that they are unable to express themselves and so relinquish their decision making power consequently forgoing individual rights and responsibilities.

Fawbert (2008) Weinman (2008) noted that there are clear potential downsides to group work including student resentment due to diminished role creating on -going resentment for the less assertive student. Also more time is needed for organizing the groups, and dealing with intra? group problems. Extrinsic factors such as Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)

can motivate students to attend college that otherwise could not afford to be there but it doesn??™t motivate some of them to learn, consequently this can lead to disruptive behaviour. When reward controls behaviour, they attribute their actions to factors outside of themselves (e. g., the reward) and they lose a sense of self-determination. Once the reward contingency is no longer in effect, there is nothing compelling them to work at the activity so their interest declines. Paul R.

Pintrich (2010) , The argument is that people should do something because they enjoy it, and that rewards only sabotage natural desire. Watkins (2008) felt that if a student focuses more on the punishment or reward then only compliance rather than learning is achieved. Reiss (2004) disagrees. ??? There is no reason that money or that grades cant motivate college students??? he said. ??? Its all a matter of individual differences. Different people are motivated in different ways.??? It essential that students know when they have done well and what is good about it. Petty (2004) feels that it is impossible to learn if no one ever tells you when you have done well.

Students need an informative view on what and why they have done well, it is better for them to discover that they have succeeded with one of their goals than simply gaining the teachers approval. Information needs to be constructive about what needs improving and how to improve it, not just about what is wrong. Eric Berne??™s transactional theories play a large part in F. E. The students whilst being classed as ??? adults??™ (i.

e. they are no longer in compulsory education) are still young and often act in a child like manner. This in turn encourages the teacher to adopt the

parent role which produces a child like response which perpetuates the parent ego state. Reece and walker (2009) talk about ??? stroking??™ ??“ in babies and children it is physical touching, but in adults it can be metaphorical i. e. a positive stroke would be ??? that is a really good essay??? a negative stroke would be ??? your hopeless!??? Berne suggests if we do not receive positive strokes we will seek negative ones, as any attention is better than no attention.

Disruptive students may have been conditioned to seek negative strokes within their personal lives however Reece and walker (2009) go on to say that if positive strokes are given for good performance then the student may start to modify their behaviour to gain positive affirmation. During a team building day where students competed in ??? it??™s a knockout??™ type event, house points were awarded to the winner of each event. A few students stated categorically that they were NOT competing in any childish competitions. Yet the loudest protester went on to gain eleven house points in total and has won the overall house certificate for most house points gained this month and she happy and thriving in the class room this week. In 1964 Victor Vroom defined motivation as a process allowing choices to be made by the individual. These choices are based on how well the actual results may match up to the desired results. Motivation comes from the expectancy that a certain amount of effort will achieve a certain outcome and it is this expectancy that fires motivation. Cowely (2004) says ,??? Expect the best, be surprised rather than angry if a student doesnt fulfil your expectations.

If we only expect our students to be what they already are, then thats all well ever get???. During a teaching observation the lesson seemed pretty ineffective due to the fact that nerves got the better of the teacher, amongst other things the aims were clear but the objectives were not reiterated and yet Petty (2004) feels there is nothing wrong with a minor disaster so long as you learn from it. Mistakes are not only inevitable, they are necessary as part of the learning process Petty also feels that if we don??™t experience the occasional failure then we are not experimenting enough ??? one must go too far to discover how far one can go??? The feedback for this observation stated that the lesson was planned with plenty of detail, the learners were supported well during the series of planned activities and apparently a calm, encouraging and positive manner was presented. The main points that need revising are the lesson objectives ensuring that they fulfil the SMART acronym (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic & Time) Also more time must be taken over the introduction of tasks, the learners were eager to get started on them but they needed to be more conscious of what they were doing.

Avis et al (2010) feel that to ensure a smooth transition between activities learners need to understand where they are in the session and where they are heading. Practical considerations such as collection and distribution of learning materials or equipment each activity should be concluded effectively and the next introduced properly. Ofsted and the DfES widely promote learning style theories. Identifying appropriate learner needs is not easy but in broad terms the teacher needs to ask ??? what do the learners need to know??™ and ??? what should the learners be able to do as a

result??™ Blooms taxonomy classifies learning outcomes depending on the types of learning which they represent using the cognitive, psychomotor and affective domain.

Each domain starts off with the simplest form of learning and moves towards more complex and challenging types of learning. Petty (2004)Kolb (1984) [cited in businessballs. com. accessed 2 Dec 2010]says that ideally his experiential learning theory model represents a learning cycle or spiral where the learner touches all the bases, ie.

, a cycle of experiencing, reflecting, thinking, and acting. Immediate or concrete experiences lead to observations and reflections. These reflections are then assimilated into concepts with implications for action, which the person can actively test and experiment with, which in turn enable the creation of new experiences.

Businessballs. com (2010)The Visual Auditory & Kinesthetic learning styles model offer reasonably simple and accessible methods to understand and explain peoples preferred ways to learn. The authors of businessballs. com feel that occasionally people will write that the use of such models and tests can be problematical. They concur by saying that this is true of course of any tool if undue reliance is placed on the methodology or if the results of tests are treated as absolute and exclusive of other styles and considerations in the overall mix of a persons personality and needs. Rowntree (1991) was one of the ??? doubters??™.

He felt ??? That the problem with this type of structured standardized assessment task in pursuit of comparability, measurability and fairness

to ??? students in general??™ is that we may learn more about the similarities amongst students (and help create them) Than ways in which they differ??? Nomothetic assessment collects data to compare one student with another. Classing people as ??? slow learners??™ or ??? high flyers??™ and sort people into pre existing categories implying that there are plenty of people like them around. The nomothetic appeal is probably at its strongest when we do summative assessment to ensure that everyone is working to a similar standard. Ideographic assessment aims to find out about the individual and their uniqueness. In the long run this may be a better way of assessing a person thus selecting the people who are truly interested in their chosen field which may help cut high attrition rates in health and social care courses in the future. The classroom environment is a place where students and teachers alike spend a lot of time, so it is important that the space is utilised to its maximum potential.

A diadactic teacher will have people sitting still and listening to her presentation whilst a Kinesthetic teacher may have students moving around and learning material strewn everywhere. A tidy room commands more respect than working amid clutter. Organisation and safety project a caring attitude towards the students and lay out is also very important. Cowely (2001) thinks that the way the teacher lays out the desks and chairs can have a strong impact on the way the students perceived the teachers style and can also have an effect on the way students behave. Desks in groups tends to indicate a more laid back approach, leaning towards group work allowing the teacher to move freely amongst the students. A disadvantage to

this layout is that not all student??™s faces can be seen at the same time allowing for chatting or plotting.

Also students may perceive the teacher as less traditional therefore less strict. A ??? horse shoe??™ layout around the edge of the room can work well as everyone can see the front of the classroom, and the teacher can have everyone in line of vision. The problem with this layout is that if the students are using laptops all the screens are facing away from the teacher leading to the temptation to go on Facebook or shopping sites, and whilst the teacher can walk behind the students, there can be a tendency for the students at the end of the rows to ??? block??™ the way and bags left behind chairs are a hazard. Whilst observing a qualified teacher at work it was worth noting than when handing out more than one piece of work to the class at a time, it was mentioned that one piece was to be assessed and the other was just for information so nearly every student disregarded the ??? unimportant??™ ??? information??™ piece and concentrated solely on the piece to be marked. It was noted that it may be wiser to not to advise them which piece was which till the end of the session to avoid confrontation about not doing both pieces.

Teachers need to organise their time, discuss, observe others, reflect, evaluate and diagnose their needs . Martin (1992) found in a study group of student teachers that more than half had set expectations of themselves that were too high. Classroom events can never be predicted with accuracy. Disruptive effects occur for many reasons – nevertheless with good support and experience teachers should be able to attempt to predict pupil??™s responses to work and develop routines to engender predictability and

reduce ambiguity. The House of Commons Children, Schools and Families Committee (2010) want induction to the teaching profession to be treated as a three to five year process, and newly qualified teachers seen much more explicitly as ??? novice??™ teachers with much still to learn. Difficult pupil behaviour, government micro-management and bureaucracy, numerous curriculum changes, and exam league tables all put huge pressures on new teachers. Curtis (2009) Classroom management and management of student conduct are skills that teachers acquire and hone over time. Skills such as effective classroom management are central to teaching and require " common sense," consistency, a sense of fairness, and courage.

These skills also require that teachers understand in more than one way the psychological and developmental levels of their students. The skills associated with effective classroom management are only acquired with practice, feedback, reflection and a willingness to learn from mistakes. Adprima (2010) [Accessed 1 dec 2010] Unlike nursing where the student can practice injection technique on an orange or passing a naso-gastric tube on a dummy there is no practical way for student teachers to " practice" their nascent skills other than actually going into a classroom setting. Reference listAvis, J. Fisher, R. Thompson, R.

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