

You are
never too
young to
philosophise

Aiming High through Education for Global Citizenship



Oxfam-funded project:
"Aiming High through Education for Global Citizenship"

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1 context

1.1 background to the project

Wyche Primary School in Nantwich, Cheshire was placed into serious weaknesses following an OFSTED inspection in 2002. In January 2003, the school was moved into special measures. The Headteacher at the time resigned and the Deputy took early retirement; the Local Education Authority [LEA] seconded a Head and a Deputy until December 2005.

In May 2005, the school was brought out of special measures and was redefined as a 'school causing concern'. OFSTED's report at the time noted that, "*The school has successfully stemmed the trend of decline found at the last inspection but there is still much to do to enable the pupils to achieve the standards commensurate with their abilities and to challenge the higher attaining pupils appropriately*".

The priorities for the school for 2005-6, as expressed in the LEA's Action Plan (June 2005), were:

- raising standards throughout the school;
- improving the quality of teaching;
- improving the systems for assessing and tracking pupils' progress;
- improving leadership and management at all levels;
- improving coordination and provision for pupils with special educational needs.

1.2 project aims and elements

This project was devised by Cheshire Development Education Centre [CDEC] in tandem with the newly appointed headteacher, Deana Aldred, in advance of her taking up the position in September 2005. Deana had had previous involvement with CDEC's 'Promoting Diversity' project and was thus familiar with CDEC's personnel, ways of working and educational approach. The project was thus designed to operate in line with, and in support of, the strategies to raise standards and secure continuing improvement being envisaged by the headteacher in planning for her new role.

Taking the outcomes of Every Child Matters as its starting point, the Wyche School Development Plan [SDP] for 2005-06 identified the following aims:

1. to develop a healthy safe and stimulating learning environment;
2. to provide an inclusive education so that all children can achieve their full potential;
3. to extend the role of the school through collaboration with pupils parents staff governors and the wider community.

The SDP further indicated that attention in the forthcoming academic year was to be focused in particular on:

- developing collaborative learning skills;
- maximising the impact of target setting on learning;
- developing the role of governors and parents in school life.

The Aiming High project secured funding from Oxfam's 'Tier 3' Grants Programme, along with some additional financial support from the LEA. The key aims of the project, as described in Oxfam's grant application form, were to investigate:

1. How applying a global dimension to teaching and learning in a school that has just come out of special measures and is now a school causing concern can help achieve standards.
2. How education for Global Citizenship can contribute to the achievement of the five outcomes in Every Child Matters, focussing particularly on (3) "Enjoying and Achieving" and (4) "Making a positive contribution".
3. How effective is the use of mind friendly learning methodologies such as the Kagan methodology in developing thinking and learning skills in relation to education for Global Citizenship in order to involve all children according to 'Every Child Matters'.

Implementation of the project has involved the delivery of three interlinked elements:

- whole school activity directed towards promoting the global dimension – through hosting assemblies, and helping to develop the school environment, through displays in corridors, etc.;
- support to curriculum development, through advice and guidance as well as provision of resources and practical assistance;
- support to development of teaching strategies, through training (relating in particular to Kagan and Philosophy for Children [P4C] methodologies) and incorporating a direct role in implementation (through regular P4C sessions led by CDEC with Yr 4 and 5 groups for example).

1.3 evaluation parameters and limitations

This project, whilst in many ways integral to the school's development, has inevitably represented only one tiny part of the overall picture of the school year 2005-6. Thus, it was clear from the start – and fully acknowledged by Oxfam - that assessment of attribution would be problematic. Further, on its own terms, the scale and nature of the project has to some extent militated against robust monitoring – *“[building] in time for reporting, monitoring and evaluation as you go along [has been] very challenging on one day per week”*. These difficulties have been exacerbated by additional complexities – no doubt natural to a school characterised as failing - resulting both from the intense and multifarious external pressures on the school, and from internal sensitivities needing careful handling, around staffing and leadership for example.

From a purist evaluation perspective, ideally there would have been a greater range of inputs informing this review - from staff and pupils in particular. But more pragmatic considerations have necessarily and rightly prevailed. As a result, means of verification have been limited in some cases. Nevertheless, multiple perspectives are reflected in the findings, with sources drawn on including:

- the reflections of CDEC staff and the school's headteacher, gathered on an ongoing basis throughout the course of the project and in end-of-project interviews;
- documentation directly related to the project (CDEC reports on activities for example);
- anecdotal and recorded input from pupils and to some extent teachers too, and to a lesser extent parents;
- feedback report on the Inclusion Quality Mark assessment, July 2006;
- the school's Self Evaluation Form, which itself is supported by background evidence;
- other school documentation, including the School Development Plan; and
- OFSTED's inspection of Wyche in February 2007

2 project outcomes

2.1 personal development and well being

2.1.1 SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY

Tolstoy reminds us that each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way, and the same presumably goes for schools. Wyche in 2005 faced a unique set of challenging circumstances and, in response to these, the headteacher's assessment was that literacy and numeracy strategies on their own wouldn't do the trick; bigger issues needed to be resolved.

In this context, it seems clear that teaching and learning methodologies introduced through, and as a result of, the project have represented a key mechanism for

enhancing levels of consultation with pupils, with consequent benefits to teaching and learning and to school improvement more generally.

The School Evaluation Form [SEF] for example affirms that, "*Circle time and Philosophy for Children make a significant contribution to moral and emotional development*", stating that, "*We have introduced Philosophy for Children to support learners in expressing their views, considering the views of others, and making informed choices. Monitoring of learning is showing that learners are making good progress in developing these skills. Some learners have developed it as an additional social and emotional support for themselves and others; others enjoy the challenge of debate*".

This internal assessment is corroborated by the external Inclusion Quality Mark [IQM] report, which noted that one mechanism to help pupils foster positive attitudes and support has been the "*effective use of circle time*", and which commended the "*investment in developing emotional literacy through the use of Philosophy for Children used to challenge stereotypes and discrimination*". And, as quoted in the recent OFSTED report, pupils believe that "*one of the best things about our school is that teachers take time to listen to us*".

This case is outlined in a little more detail in section 6.4. To expand on just one of the strands flowing from enhancing pupil participation and voice, and linked to Every Child Matters agendas around children staying safe, the headteacher reported to the governing body in May 2006 that, "*discussions [with the children] highlighted the need for the school to teach children safe practices on the way to and from school ... Another outcome is the clear need to continuously reinforce the Anti-Bullying messages*". As a result of hearing concerns directly raised by pupils, issues of behaviour were further tackled, for example through the introduction of worry boxes, and through assemblies and posters reinforcing the 'You Must Tell' message.

2.1.2 SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

The project has also contributed to physical changes within the school. And whilst the displays in the conservatory suffered from "*too much traffic in that area damaging the displays*", exhibitions arranged in the hallway were by all accounts more successful: "*parents have noticed them and there have been a few comments on how it looks (smart, tidy, colourful etc)*". This view tallies with the IQM, which noted that, "*wall displays are vibrant, informative and interactive ... There is a celebration of diversity; social and ethnic diversity is celebrated in the corridors and conservatory with displays on Oxfam and CDEC*".

Already in May 2005, OFSTED had praised the "*range of vibrant displays*" that helped stimulate learning "*about the multicultural society in which we live*", and was remarking how, even at that time, "*displays are central to the school's philosophy*". Whilst important to the spirit and look of the school, therefore, work in this area may represent less an advance than a reinforcement of previous good practice.

More generally the project has contributed to what the SEF describes as an installing of "*a strong sense of ownership and responsibility for the school environment amongst pupils and staff*", with "*environmental responsibilities (linked to the*

Millennium Goals) ... being promoted to the school community through the work of the Eco Committee".

2.1.3 CITIZENSHIP & THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY

Global Citizenship assemblies run by CDEC staff covered a wide range of topics – including Children’s Rights, water, journeys, recycling, Fairtrade, ‘send my friend to school’, arts and crafts, flags and refugees - and were said to have, *“made a real impact on the pupils”*, stimulating appetite for further investigation. Alongside more mainstream lines of suggested further enquiry - (“what other people are saying in different languages?”, “what kind of food do other countries have?”) - pupils expressed keenness to learn more about conundrums such as: “how does a river get connected to the sea?”, “how was the first person on earth born?”, “how to work together as a team?”, and “chicken or egg?”, each of which sounds deserving of lifetime study.

Clearly, the assemblies were well delivered and well received. Examples of pupils making connections in the classroom, and at home, have been cited, with some children mentioning they had bought Fairtrade products, for example. Input on Children’s Rights issues seems to have permeated pupils’ thinking too, as indicated by later reflections on the ‘wants and needs’ cards. Pupils in Year 5 were able to make links between the water assembly and the water topic in Geography. Pupil feedback is positive and the SEF notes that, *“Oxfam/CDEC project ... has promoted understanding of rights and responsibilities. A clear priority is to develop children’s understanding of themselves, their relationships with others, their community and the wider world”*. But this is a complex undertaking and it was acknowledged that there is, *“still work to do as some [Yr 6] children are still expressing ideas of other countries, such as those in Africa, as poor, and in need of charity”* (see also section 6.2).

2.2 quality of provision

2.2.1 CURRICULUM

Whilst the application of a greater global dimension in teaching and learning might have moved forward more slowly than CDEC would ideally have liked (raising questions addressed elsewhere around managing expectations and the role of the ‘global’ in ‘global citizenship’), the assessment now is that *“Global Citizenship is threaded across the curriculum and on a whole school scale”*. One notable feature of this has been the reorganisation of the citizenship curriculum into PSHCE-themed off-timetable days. As the OFSTED report of February 2007 reiterates, this in itself has been valuable in renewing teaching practices and offering opportunities for enhanced creativity and fun in teaching and learning.

Hence, the SEF states that, *“there is a strong programme of citizenship, and learners demonstrate a good understanding of their rights and responsibilities within the school community, the local and wider communities”*. Training, funded by the project, *“has strengthened the learning/teaching of PSHCE in Wyche”* as well as within the local education network.

2.2.2 TEACHING AND LEARNING

OFSTED in 2005 expressed the concern that, *"the quality of learning did not always match that of the teaching. Where the pupils made less progress in lessons they relied too much on adult support they were unaware of the skills they needed to be successful and, in a few lessons, they lacked motivation because they were not suitably involved"*.

As part of the project, CDEC has provided training in Kagan and Philosophy for Children [P4C] methodologies as well as taking a direct role in running regular P4C sessions with a (particularly challenging) Year 4 group, and later with Year 5 pupils.

The Kagan approach was immediately successful, with teachers quickly adopting some of the techniques from the sessions, and with these proving popular with pupils:

"We like working in groups for Round Robin in Literacy and Numeracy."

"Rally Robin is good fun and helps you to think quickly."

"It helps you to find ideas for your work and share ideas."

"It's better than putting your hand up and answering because it gives you time to think about the answers."

That these techniques have been adopted across the school is corroborated by the IQM report which observed that, *"paired and cooperative learning is evident, e.g. rally robin and round robin Kagan co-operative structures"*. And, as the SEF notes, *"monitoring of teaching and learning has shown that co-operative learning strategies are making learning accessible and fun"* and improving pupils' participation and listening skills.

Kagan proved easy and accessible; in contrast, P4C has been less quickly adopted, perhaps reflecting natural barriers created by the inherent intensity of the approach: *"Some topics got quite heavy and the thinking ... hard work"*. Particular concerns raised by teachers included:

- the difficulty of involving some special needs children in discussions;
- the significant commitment of time needed, especially given difficulties when seeking to revisit previous discussions; and
- that outcomes were intangible and difficult to link to the curriculum.

Given the bespoke and hence time-consuming nature of the P4C methodology, and that the fact that it entails something of a leap of faith, it is not surprising that its introduction in the school, beyond that directly delivered by CDEC, was for a time

fairly limited. Where P4C was introduced, it seems to have been a largely fruitful experience for the pupils, bearing out the assessment that, *"some very thoughtful questions were generated and useful enquiries were held"*. The children were described as being enthusiastic and full of spirit.

CDEC's Year 5 P4C write-ups, for example, include the following observations:

April 25 –
"the same 5 or 6 children inputting in the discussion though all the children listened carefully to what was being said"

May 2 –
"this week was very encouraging as more of the children are inputting into the debate ... I think the children are ready to start running their own dialogue"

May 9 –
"children are picking up the techniques and confidence of the enquiry ... when it comes to the voting stage the children opt for a question that is 'easy' to answer ... I think I need to begin to challenge them more"

Progress is not linear, however; the sessions have had their setbacks:

June 27
"I did not feel the enquiry had much spark; many of the children did not take interest in it. I am not sure if it was the ... heat or the noise from the other classrooms putting them off or if the story was too difficult or perhaps they were just bored"

Overall, it was said that, *"some of the children doing P4C ... really enjoyed themselves but, in the words of one year 4 pupil, 'not every week'"*.

Teachers as well as pupils need to feel comfortable with the approach and achieving this inevitably takes time. Staff support and willingness to implement the approach is of course critical, so the fact that a staff member has received training and has now taken over from the headteacher in taking lead responsibility for P4C is hugely important. Prospects for sustaining and developing P4C thus appear relatively good, with a lunchtime club as well as weekly sessions with class groups in place, and plans for gifted and talented groups to work on P4C, and for staffing capacity to be extended further. Indeed, more recently, staff from other schools

have been visiting in order to see P4C in action, and so the effects are continuing to expand and extend.

3 project implementation

Managing the project has for CDEC been enjoyable, fascinating and enlightening, but not surprisingly a challenging experience too.

For example, some frustrations were expressed by CDEC, about six months into the project, that implementation was somewhat disassociated from the wider staff team, a concern compounded by a lack of a clear sense about actual progress being made. Difficulties were quickly resolved at the time, but the fact that issues like this arose is illustrative that achieving a common view of how the project was progressing and should progress was extraordinarily difficult, in an environment where time to consider such questions jointly (or even to communicate what was going on) was severely constrained

In this case, for the headteacher to act as the focus and conduit for the project in its early stages seems to have been the most feasible approach, given the need for development to be carefully nurtured, with a gradual diminution of control as effects and understanding extended through the school. Over time, the project seems to have spread its influence, gradually and inexorably, from the headteacher outwards, although it wouldn't have necessarily been obvious that this was occurring at the time.

It's conceivable that the project could have been better structured to avoid some of these difficulties. One suggestion for example has been that instead of working a day a week across the year, it would have been better to have frontloaded the effort, working full time earlier on and then gradually reducing the time commitment.

However, my suspicion is that the more important learning is that any future project of this type inescapably travels along a bumpy road. Operating in the hothouse of a school considered to be 'causing concern', and with leadership and staff incredibly busy and pressured, and with some natural apprehensiveness of outsider-led interventions, is inevitably not going to be straightforward. What is important is that there is flexibility and a willingness to expect the unexpected.

4 achievements

Wyche came off the list of schools causing concern in March 2006. By July 2006, the school received a highly positive review in its IQM assessment report, including that, *"the school puts into practice its commitment to developing the role of pupil voice ... pupil voice is a strength at Wyche"*.

Most recently, the school was assessed as being good with outstanding features. Amidst much panegyric praise offered by OFSTED following its recent inspection (February 2007) are the following quotes:

- *"The quality of teaching and learning is good with some outstanding features"*.

- *"The school places a strong emphasis on moral values. This has resulted in excellent behaviour and pupils adopting very mature and sensible attitudes. Staff commitment and the systems put in place by the school ensure that the care, guidance and support for children are outstanding".*
- *"pupils really enjoy coming to school. They say, 'Ours is a safe and happy school and all our teachers help us do well.' Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding".*

From the start, this project was conceived and articulated by the headteacher as central to the school's aims and strategic direction, with the introduction of Kagan and P4C methodologies seen as invaluable to school processes and ambitions. As noted in the IQM, *"the development of inclusive principles underpins many recent INSET events, e.g. cooperative learning structures, anti bullying training"*. Importantly, the CDEC project was integrated within school planning from the beginning, featuring strongly in the SDP for example, as the following excerpts indicate:

aim	anticipated CDEC contribution to include ...
develop a healthy safe and stimulating learning environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • raising awareness of rights and responsibilities in assemblies • using displays to help develop understanding of citizenship and community
provide an inclusive education so that all children can achieve their full potential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • training for co-operative learning strategies • introduction of co-operative learning strategies • develop understanding of citizenship through assemblies and class work
extend the role of the school through collaboration with pupils parents staff governors and the wider community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • training for the local schools network • develop the outdoor learning environment

Similarly, the SEF makes frequent explicit or indirect reference to the CDEC project and its benefits. Key priorities for future development outlined in the SEF include the extension of provision of Philosophy for Children to support investment in emotional and social well being, as well work towards the Green Flag award, linked to the Millennium Development Goals Project.

Wyche is also now involved as a 'project school' with CDEC's 'Millennium Development Goals' project, funded by DFID, thus extending the formal relationship into the medium term at least.

Thus, although as noted it is somewhat problematic to distil from everything the impact the project has had, a reasonable summary of the project's achievements and sustainability is that:

1. The school's progress has been excellent. The evidence for this is unequivocal.
2. CDEC's support role has been highly important to this. The evidence for this is strong.

3. Prospects for sustainability (and further development) of key project elements are good. The evidence for this is sound.

This then represents a great success for the school and for CDEC, and for a relatively small investment.

5 learning from the project

5.1 global citizenship as a vehicle for school improvement

CDEC's role in Wyche's success story has been in particular through the following means of contribution:

1. resources and expertise

It takes time for teachers to assimilate and introduce new teaching methods. At Wyche, the headteacher's commitment to their deployment was strong, but there was less immediate enthusiasm from amongst the staff who were unfamiliar with the methodologies being advocated, and needed to be convinced about their merits and practicability. The contribution that CDEC was able to make, through training, modelling good practice and resource support, was thus vital. Without the additional skills, contacts and capacity that CDEC brought to the school, the headteacher's aspirations to introduce new teaching approaches would have been far more difficult to fulfil.

2. external support and affirmation

One helpful aspect of the project seems to have been that training provided by the project was for the Nantwich cluster of schools, not Wyche alone: as well as benefiting staff through the wider sharing of good practice, the fact that Wyche hosted this provision was something of a boost for the school. More directly, too, the presence of outsiders offering support rather than judgements seems to have been beneficial to the school and its sense of institutional self-esteem.

3. a viable route through the turmoil

Any headteacher trying to 'turn around' a school faces constraints in matching resources to aspirations, as well as huge sensitivities in managing institutional change. Given this context, the use of CDEC's resources and skills proved a fruitful additional route for the school to follow: the fact that CDEC was seeking to help deliver improvements in relatively non-contentious subject areas (in contrast to other areas of school performance that were the subject of interrogation by various inspection regimes for example) made it a more palatable course to follow for a school under pressure. Apart from anything else, it was an area where it was possible to take risks and experiment with more creative approaches without the need to accommodate external oversight. CDEC's archetypally non-threatening approach would have helped with this too of course.

5.2 necessary preconditions

That the success of this particular project is not necessarily replicable; certain preconditions facilitated this project's effectiveness. In this case, the project seems to have worked because:

1. the headteacher shares a commitment to the values underpinning global citizenship education

The headteacher's stated focus of interest was in asking, "*How can we empower children to make a difference? In their learning, their lives, their school, their community - in the world? How do new approaches to pupil participation contribute to tackling underachievement, and to raising standards?*" These questions encapsulate the values that she sought to bring to the school. As the IQM observed, it is, "*evident from the school's literature that inclusive principles underpin the mission statement at Wyche*". In effect, CDEC provided guidance and support in the delivery of the school leadership's stated and actual standards, values and principles.

2. the headteacher is dynamic, with very clear sense of what needs to be done, and how this can be done

The IQM noted that, the "*headteacher ... provides an inspirational role model for all in the school*", remarking on the "*expectation of continuous improvement*". Her admirable combination of vision, understanding and tenacity have been vital in ensuring that the project has been delivered along the lines intended.

3. there were and are high levels of trust between the headteacher and CDEC

A prior and good relationship was vital.

4. there has been flexibility and understanding on both sides

Unfamiliar with working with schools in these circumstances, going into the project CDEC "*underestimated or basically didn't know what the situation is like for a school that has been in special measures*". At times, the project has been onerous and difficult for both sides, but at all times there seems to have been a good spirit, and a supportive and open relationship.

5. project timing was right

The fact that the project was developed and funding secured *in advance* of the headteacher starting at the school was critical. For one thing, it was helpful for the headteacher personally to have the project in place as she headed into the unknown. For another, the fact that there were already-existing funds and plans enabled things to move quickly and without having to secure widespread internal buy-in first. It is unlikely that the governors, for example, would have chosen to prioritise dedicating resources to this area if the funding had not been already in place. CDEC's presence at the first staff meeting was also symbolically important in giving an indication of, and laying the foundations for, the new approach.

6. CDEC has delivered a high quality support provision

Clearly, it helps and is significant that CDEC consistently delivers to a high standard, and through the ways that it works is able to connect with both staff and pupils.

6 some comments and conclusions

6.1 timescale of change

This report presents only a brief review of what the project has achieved; it is regrettably a somewhat limited picture. Whilst this is probably appropriate in terms of scale, a further limitation is the fact that it represents only a snapshot at a particular time. Although a few months on from the notional end of the project, many changes are only now being embedded, and further developments are happening all the time within the school, and with wider effects even spreading to other schools (through spin offs from the initial cluster training at Wyche, including follow-up training sessions, and through staff visiting Wyche to observe P4C sessions, for example).

Given this continuing evolution, with this project - as presumably with others that Oxfam funds - it would be pertinent and salutary, if possible, to try to investigate some of these wider and longer-term effects through a future review. A repeated snapshot of the project's outcomes, taken in, say, the autumn term, could give useful additional evidence of benefit and thus a clearer sense of the project's value.

6.2 no template

The headteacher has negotiated the challenges faced with extraordinary and inspirational commitment and purpose. CDEC has been an important supporting actor in this. But it would seem that the experience at Wyche is essentially non-replicable, in the sense that it is not transposable to a different context.

Lessons can be derived from the experience, however. My own suggestions are that any equivalent project:

1. requires the active support of the headteacher: this perhaps raises issues for the development education community more generally about how best to engage with headteachers, as well as teachers;
2. will necessarily involve flexibility as well as resilience: and that this should be reflected in the planning and in stated aspirations;
3. almost certainly depends for viability on some kind of prior relationship having established good levels of understanding and trust;
4. could usefully deploy the Kagan and P4C as a kind of a double act, as in this case, with former "*doable and unthreatening*", the latter more challenging but commensurately more enriching;
5. is likely to be hampered if needing to operate within a one year timescale, and could therefore more sensibly be conceived and funded over a longer period;
6. could confidently take Every Child Matters as its locus and anchor, in the knowledge that this kind of approach can feasibly run alongside more traditional literacy/numeracy approaches, to good effect, although (in this case at least) this has been through co-existence rather than integration.

6.3 the 'global citizenship' offer

In its grants programme application form, Oxfam asks for details about how "*participatory teaching methods so closely aligned to Education for Global Citizenship*" are being encouraged and emphasised within any project seeking funding. That's one way to put it; but in this case at least it doesn't seem to get to the heart of what education for global citizenship has been/is. No doubt these questions have been asked before, and answered, but there seems to be a lack of clarity around what the term 'education for global citizenship' is describing: is it a body of methodologies, or is it a subject matter, or both? If it's both, as it seems to be, what is the connection between the two, and in what combinations does it come (and still be called 'education for global citizenship')?

As was pointed out, the "*global dimension in itself won't raise standards, it's the way that you do it*". Indeed, lines of enquiry stimulated by CDEC and its presence have not always been global, nor would it have been viable for them to have been so, given the credible analysis that too-early introduction of global dimensions would have been meaningless to pupils wrestling with more immediate questions of relationships and personal rights and responsibilities. Global considerations represent a somewhat elliptical starting point; issues have been more easily, more obviously and more appropriately addressed through an approach based primarily and initially on considerations of school and community.

CDEC are clearly skilled at helping pupils make global connections, and some areas seem to lend themselves to this better than others, with Fairtrade providing a relatively straightforward route in, linking more obviously as it does to actual behaviours. The pupils also instigated involvement with the *Railway Children* project, a charity for street children in India but linked to Crewe and the railways. The fact that the school is located in an area of relative deprivation within an affluent town also opens up possibilities to explore local-global questions and links. But taking this project overall the global dimension is perhaps best characterised as having followed through in the slipstream; capacity to make informed judgements is the key factor and the interpretation by the school was that this was best stimulated through other subject means.

In other words, this has been a fantastic project success for the school and CDEC and Oxfam, but if the assessment were being based on whether pupils have evolved the characteristics of 'global citizens', this would not so obviously be the case (at least not yet).

One aspiration behind the project was to be able to make the case that introducing the global dimension can help promote higher standards. I'm no expert but suspect that to sell this idea within educational circles there is a likely need to be clearer about what is 'product' on offer, and how does it work.

6.4 every child matters

OFSTED's 2005 report identified the key priorities for the school's development as being to:

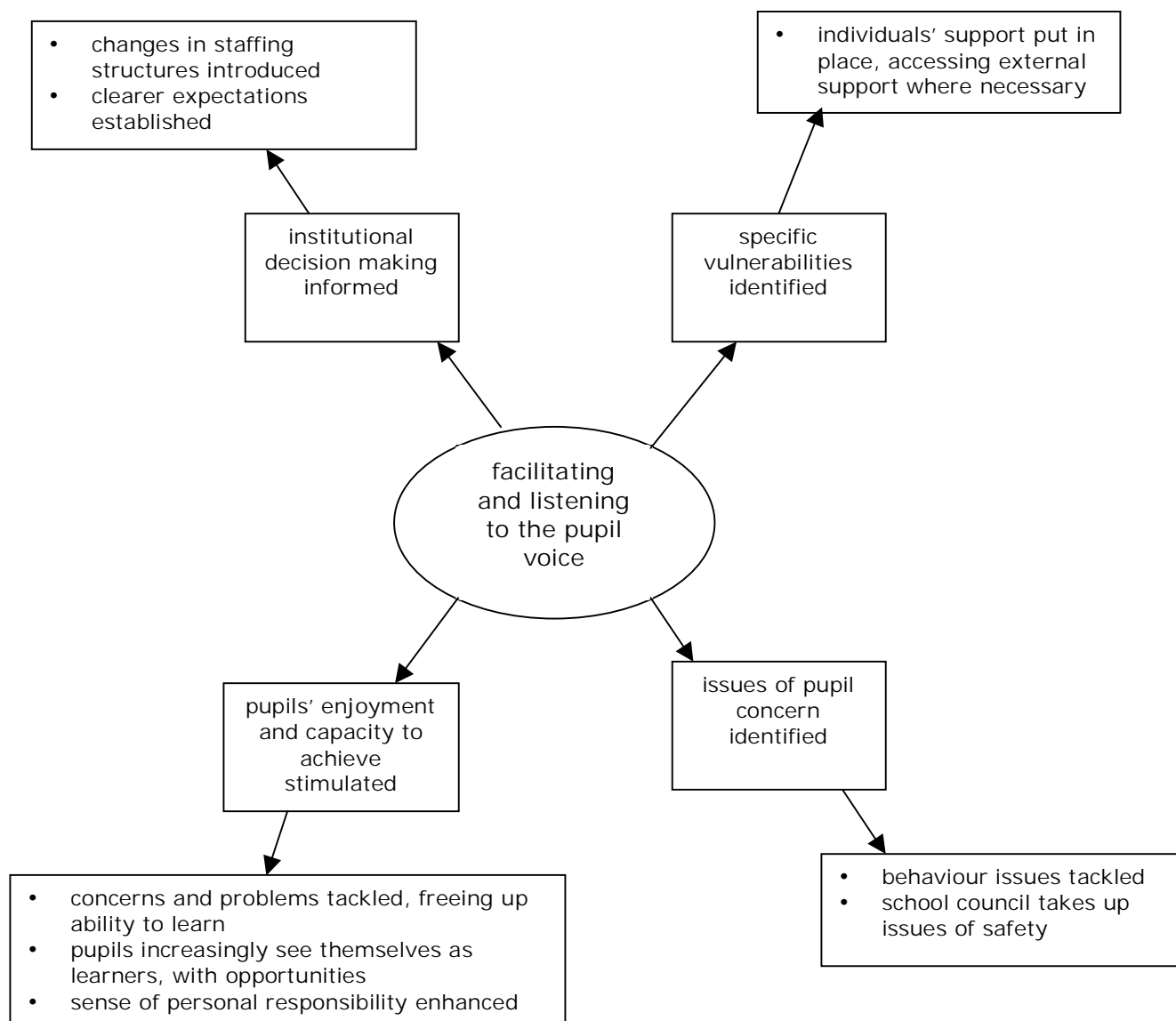
- continue to raise standards, particularly for the higher attaining pupils;
- build on what has been successfully achieved so far and continue the school's momentum of improvement by accurate self-evaluation, agreed priorities and sound strategic planning.

Normally, the shortest distance between two points is a straight line. This is not necessarily the case in non-Euclidian geometry of course, and since September 2005, Wyche seems to have been modelling a non-Euclidian route to enhancing pupil attainment, taking its inspiration from Every Child Matters, alongside more orthodox approaches.

Every Child Matters has formed the basis of the headteacher's approach, with powerful input from CDEC. That this approach has been an effective one is confirmed by OFSTED, with the analysis in the recent inspection report that, "*The headteacher has an exceptionally clear vision on how to move the school forward and this underpins all areas. The result has been an impressive improvement: she has placed pupils' personal development alongside that of academic achievements and this is at the heart of school improvement*".

This school's experience demonstrates that taking the pupil voice as a starting point can lead to multiple and diverse and unexpected outcomes.

Without wishing to compress the substantial achievements of the school into a somewhat prosaic and simplistic visual representation, (just some of the) outcomes emanating from this approach in this case could be summarised in the following way:



At the heart of this has been the notion that if learners stay and feel safe, and are encouraged and enabled to make a positive contribution to their school and community, and if enjoyment is prioritised and expectations raised, then all kinds of great things are possible. The approach – in this case at least – appears to have been fully validated.

As the recent OFSTED report noted, *"Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and feel, in particular, that it takes good care of their children, summed up in the comment, 'Every child certainly does matter at The Wyche Primary School.'"*