

# ReDesigning

## **Authentic assessment by demonstrating ipsative progress through portfolio and exhibition**

### **Case Study: The Reggio Emilia Approach**

DESIGN – knowing through observing and portfolios

The Reggio design of a mix of large and small spaces, of art studios and workshops, of informal learning areas and then use of small groups rather than formal class teaching enable children to communicate with each other, and to listen to each other. It also helps the teachers to observe the children's interactions and to monitor and record the development of each child. Documentation is an essential tool for listening, observing and evaluating and is at the heart of the Reggio pedagogy.

"The teacher is able to monitor and record the development of each child through keeping their work, recording their conversations, photographing or videoing certain projects and noting all that occurs". - Reggio teacher

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### **Case Study: Madeley Court School**

DESIGN – Personal Record of School Experience

The school adopted the assessment procedure pioneered by the Sutton Centre in Nottingham, another noted progressive comprehensive school. The Personal Record of School Experience (P.R.S.E) replaced the conventional school report. It was a method of collaborative profiling and was founded on two major assumptions: that there should be continuing dialogue between teachers, parents and students and that the process of learning requires active and on-going self-assessment. Each student from the start of the Year 10 kept this folder that contained regular comments by student, teacher and parent and comments from work experience employers and reports on sporting, musical, community experiences. By the end of Year 11 each student had a complete record of his or her school experience. For most students the P.R.S.E was a source of pride.

# A curriculum that articulates with youth, contemporary controversies and hopes

## Case Study: The Reggio Emilia Approach

### DESIGN – the emergent curriculum

The philosophical basis for the Reggio curriculum is the provisional nature of knowledge. Once it is accepted that knowledge is not fixed but changing then the argument for a prescriptive curriculum no longer holds. Reggio teachers start from where their children are – with their interests and their dispositions. They capture topics for study from the children's varied languages - for example, puddles, cats, dinosaurs - and these lead into projects which may be short or long term depending on the interest and commitment of the children. The city is used by the children as a learning resource for projects with teachers regarding the city as extended classroom space. Parents and other adults in the community play a part in the children's learning in projects like 'Rain in the City'

"Once children are helped to perceive themselves as authors or inventors, once they are helped to discover the pleasure of inquiry, then motivation and interest explode". – **Malaguzzi**

"Once should always start from where the child's interest and knowledge is and lead on from there". - **John Dewey**

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## Case Study: Madeley Court School

### DESIGN – a curriculum grounded in 'ordinary life'

Time table allocation of long blocks of time in both the mini-schools of the first three years and the 'learning communities' in Years 10 and 11 made possible the teaching and learning of integrated or cross curricular studies. Within these blocks a core curriculum was followed consisting of the six broad subject areas which pre-National Curriculum were generally accepted as constituting a curriculum - English, Maths, Science, Social Science, Expressive Arts, Practical Arts. These 'subjects' were transformed into a community curriculum by rooting them in the life and experiences of the neighbourhood and by involving members of the local community in contributing to the children's learning. They became cross-curricular studies by specialist teachers shaping their lessons around the understanding of concepts that reached across subjects rather than the delivery of facts relating to their particular subject.

Behind the classroom experiences of the children lay a consensus as to what constituted learning and knowledge – the development through a personal relationship with a teacher or other adult of the ability to pursue a line of inquiry and articulate and express to others the outcomes of that inquiry - and how the curriculum helped the individual child develop the characteristics of independence, autonomy, awareness of self and the skills of working productively and collaboratively.

# An inquiry and active pedagogy

## Case Study: Stantonbury Campus, Milton Keynes

DESIGN – pedagogy – student centred and collaborative

Teachers saw their role and purpose as enabling students to become independent and active critical learners. In some cases teachers were also learning outside of their subject specialism. Their responsibility was to introduce the project and promote group work as well as individual work with active enquiry. Lead lessons to the whole of the year group introduced the project through film, a talk or a dramatic experience. With longer and more flexible use of curriculum time the teachers' knowledge of their students was enhanced. Teachers would generally remain with their students as they progressed through the school.

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## Case Study: Madeley Court School

DESIGN – an experiential pedagogy

The blocked timetable and positive personal relationships provided the conditions for the learners to play a significant part in their own learning. Using the outside community as a learning resource enabled the children to respond to their own needs and interests and negotiate a learning pathway that met these needs.

Suspended timetable weeks were planned to enable all students to initiate practical projects. Years 10 and 11 often set up manufacturing companies, making things with scrap materials which they then sold to the Craft Department. They involved themselves in all stages of the manufacturing process - from design, budgeting, selection of materials, jiggling of the production line, welfare union work through to manufacture sales and accounting.

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## Case Study: Stanley Park High School

The pedagogy within Excellent Futures Curriculum, at Stanley Park High School, is driven by leading questions that are set in real-world experiences and problems. It is enquiry based, active and experiential in its nature, with collaborative and co-operative learning visible across a range of scales.

# Real-world, non-institutional workshop settings and experiences

## Case Study: Sir William Burrough Primary School

### DESIGN – Pedagogic processes:

Children at Sir William Burrough are engaged in the rich experiential learning of the International Primary Curriculum. This generates an abundance of inspiring topics, taking the children all over London to enrich their learning, and bringing experts into the school to share their passions – e.g. learning about the Rainforest sees children walking over the canopy of trees in Kew Gardens, and even handling a large, live, hairy tarantula! This is captured and shared on an iMovie or an animation on the iPad.

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## Case Study: The Reggio Emilia Approach

### DESIGN – art and creativity as the basis of education

The foundational text for the Reggio approach is 'The Hundred Languages of Children' which explains the many ways in which children can express their thoughts and their 'voice'. Drawing, painting, modelling, verbal description, the use of numbers, physical movement, drama, dance, music, puppets – these are some of the languages which children use to make sense of their worlds and to acquire knowledge. Every Reggio school has a workshop or atelier where these languages can be experimented with and practised and every school has a permanent artist/teacher known as an atelierista. The focus on art not only develops the children's imagination and social skills it also gives them the confidence to try out new things, take risks and learn what is possible.

# Formative, student centre, appreciative feedback (AfL)

## Case Study: HIGH TECH HIGH, SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

### DESIGN – Pedagogy – student centred and collaborative

Teachers see their role and purpose as enabling students to become independent, hands on and critical learners. In the classroom their task is to introduce a topic, set the schedule and pull the class to order if need be. Because of the focus on group work and collaboration noise levels could be high. One physics class of fifty students worked in groups on the topic of metamorphosis. They created comic strips showing the processes involved which they swapped with other groups who in turn wrote critical comments on 'post its' and passed on to the next group. A fascinating variety of ideas emerged. Self-evaluation is central to this vision of learning and a major part of this is the management of the time needed to complete a project.. Students learn how to be organised and staff are vigilant in ensuring that homework is given in on time and self-assessments are completed to schedule. Each student has a digital portfolio with a complete record of what they have achieved, not just in terms of marks but referring to wider goals like 'Habits of Mind' and 'Collaboration'.

#### **Students' comments:**

"Vision zero is the teachers' vision that no student will fail or have to go to summer school. They help us organise our binders so that nothing is lost. If your .own is organised then you help others."

"Every week the whole week's assignments are up on the board and they are also up on the digital site for us to check"

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## Case Study: Stanley Park High School

Collaboration leading to development underpin the assessment process at Stanley Park High School. Assessments by the teacher, the student or their peers have equal value. Utilising www (what went well) and ebi (even better if), assessment is based on formative principles: it is specific, it is encouraging and it is helpful. Assessment enables young people's learning to be affirmed in a variety of ways; portfolios, exhibitions and presentations are used more regularly than tests, and enjoy parity of esteem. Parents' evenings have been replaced by Student Led Conferences, placing the student at the heart of this reflection rather than isolated non-participant.