Project content:

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1. Abstract

Project title:

Developing and evaluating the effectiveness of engaging business partnerships within the primary school enterprise curriculum in meeting the challenges of the economic well-being strand of “Every Child Matters”.

My aims in undertaking this project are as follows:

- To develop effective local business links in order to enhance the existing enterprise curriculum - as identified in our Warwick CEI Excellence in enterprise audit (July 2007) and in our current school development plan. This should in turn lead us towards the achievement of the Warwick Excellence in Enterprise Education Platinum Award - as identified in our current school development plan and also included within my personal Performance Management targets 2008/9.

- To evaluate the business partnerships in terms of pupil and parental perception and to use this action research as a basis for future action planning. Thorough evaluation will provide a focus for future developments in this area. Taking account of the view of stakeholders is a key feature of school self evaluation and as such forms part of our school development planning.

- To evaluate the wider picture across the local Authority by gauging the impact of purposeful business links within the Primary School Enterprise curriculum upon the statutory expectations placed upon Primary Schools within the current Section 5 OFSTED framework. The current OFSTED section 5 inspections together with school self review became statutory in September 2005. Within this changed OFSTED framework was the inclusion of the 5 stands of “Every Child Matters” which includes specific expectations around enterprise and economic well-being. As school inspections take place usually within a 3 year time span, this would be an appropriate time to gauge the impact of enterprise and business partnerships in a measurable way by collating the OFSTED grades for local schools from section 5 inspections and relating the results to quantifiable data regarding enterprise training, business engagement through the “Make £5 Blossom” scheme, and the award of Warwick and Warwick Platinum Excellence in Enterprise Education.
2. Contextual statement

Sitwell Infant School is a large Community Infant School with 211 pupils aged between 4 and 7 years. The children enter school in the September of the year in which they will be 5 years of age. During the first term entry is staggered according to age and need. Children are placed in a class with others from the same pre-school placement. There is no Foundation Stage 1 provision and as such, our pupils come from over 20 different pre-school providers, both from the private and public sector - which presents us with a challenge to ensure continuity and progression. Purposeful pre-school liaison is carried out with all the providers, and visits are made by staff to those providers with larger numbers of pupils due for transfer to our school. We ensure records are utilised in order to plan for next steps, and offer several visits to familiarise parents and children alike with the new setting.

Local Authority data shows that on entry attainment is below Local Authority averages in all areas of learning except Numbers as Labels and Counting, where prior attainment is slightly above average. By the end of Key Stage 1 attainment is well above Local Authority and National averages, so the children make very good progress because of the very good teaching and support which they receive.

The Standard Intake number for each cohort of children is 76 with around 55% of pupils from outside the catchment area. 41% of pupils are from Ethnic Minority backgrounds and 31% have English as an Additional Language. The balance of boys and girls is currently 97 girls and 114 boys.

The school has a mature catchment area, with mainly private housing. In many of the households both parents are in full or part time employment, though there are an increasing number of children from single parent families. 7.5% of pupils are eligible for free school meals. This percentage has increased since the last inspection, and evidence based on parent feedback indicates that this percentage could be higher, but some parents are reluctant to claim free school meals, preferring to provide sandwiches instead or take their children home. This percentage is in line with some schools locally, though is lower than our immediate neighbouring schools.

Currently we have 32 children identified with Special Needs including 1 child with a statement of Special Educational Need. 18 children are at School Action + ( ASD, Other learning difficulties) and 2 children have medical needs.

The school operates a full Inclusion Policy, as evidenced by the number of children with specific learning difficulties, and Ethnic Minority children, whose parents choose to come to our school. As part of our Inclusion Policy, children from the neighbouring Special School are often integrated in our school on a weekly basis.

Attendance is good, with 95.9% for 2006-07. 86% of the current Year 1 and 2 children attend an After School Club.

Our overall vision statement is “To be the best that we can be”!
In line with the “Every Child Matters” agenda, educating children and ensuring that they grow to lead safe, happy and successful lives is at the heart of everything that we do.

Safe:
We want all children to live safely, free from bullying and discrimination.
**Healthy**
We want all children to be able to pursue healthy lifestyles.

**Enjoy and achieve**
We want all children to have maximum opportunities to succeed through play and learning and to reach their full potential. Our lessons are interesting and enjoyable with clear learning objectives which are shared with the children. All staff have high expectations and a commitment to continued learning.

**Make a positive contribution**
We want all children to participate in making decisions that affect them personally and in their community, and to volunteer to help others.

**Achieve economic well-being**
We want all children to aspire to achieve their goals with confidence.

At Sitwell Infant School these over-arching principles are underpinned by our vision for Enterprise Education. We firmly believe that Enterprise education is about preparing children for their futures by developing the skills for coping with life’s experiences and change at work. Our Enterprise curriculum provides opportunities for our pupils to develop teamwork, communication skills, decision making, organisational skills, risk taking and leadership within a creative and vibrant curriculum.

**My role**

**Career history:**
Since completing my initial teacher training in 1986 I have worked full time in education. The first 3 years of my teaching career were spent in a Rotherham Primary School where I was a full time Reception class teacher responsible for pre-school liaison and music throughout the school. In 1990 I secured a post with Service Children’s Schools working for the Ministry of Defence in Germany. I worked in Germany for 5 ½ years in a First School as a full time Reception / Key Stage 1 class teacher, and as music co-ordinator, was also responsible for teaching music throughout Key Stages 1 and 2. On my return to the UK I worked once again in the Rotherham Primary School where I had started my career, before securing my current post. I have been working in my present school for almost 14 years, became the Deputy Head Teacher in September 2003, and was awarded NPQH in April 2004. I am a leading Maths teacher for the Local Authority and currently am involved in 3 Local Authority steering groups relating to Maths, Mathematics through Enterprise and Transforming Rotherham Learning. I am also involved in a research project to Denmark later this year to look at personalised learning in Danish Schools.

My current roles within Sitwell Infant School are:
- Deputy Head Teacher
- Member of the Senior Leadership Team
- Full time teacher (currently Years 1 and 2)
- Year 2 co-ordinator
- Curriculum co-ordinator
- Maths co-ordinator
- Music co-ordinator
- Assessment co-ordinator
- Enterprise Champion
My latest role within school is Enterprise Champion, which I have undertaken since February 2007. It is through this role that I have undertaken the current PLW module within the following context:

The current OFSTED section 5 inspections together with school self review became statutory in September 2005. Within this changed OFSTED framework was the inclusion of the 5 stands of “Every Child Matters” which includes specific expectations around enterprise and economic well-being. As a school we were aware of how some aspects of our curriculum fulfilled the economic well-being expectations and were open to support in taking this further. In addition, during December 2006 we sought to take account of parents’ views by issuing a parental questionnaire relating to the Local Authority guarantee regarding “Every Child Matters”. 83 families responded and the results of this consultation (Appendix 1) demonstrated that 58% of families who responded felt that we were an enterprising school, 40% didn’t know and 2% didn’t think that we were enterprising. This useful consultation process prompted an action plan (Appendix 2) and, as Deputy Head Teacher, I attended the Local Authority “Rotherham Ready – Inspire Training” in order to support to the identification of (i)current school practice which fulfilled the “Enterprise” criteria and (ii) the ways forward in the development of a more enterprising skills based curriculum.

As a result of the “Rotherham Ready – Inspire” training, through staff meetings and presentations we were able to encapsulate a definition for enterprise within our school and define a role for myself as Enterprise Champion. I was then able to carry out a full Enterprise audit as part of the “Warwick CEI Excellence in Enterprise Award” application (Appendix 3) which highlighted 5 main actions within Section 7 Quality review summary: collated action plans. These 5 actions became the basis for our school development plan in 2007/2008 (Appendix 4). In February 2008 we had our latest OFSTED inspection under the new Section 5 framework, which deemed our school to be outstanding in 4 categories including:

- How well learners enjoy their education
- How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interest of learners,
- How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being

Indeed OFSTED said:

“Pupils’ preparation for their future economic well-being is outstanding. Not only do they acquire particularly good basic skills, but they also work very cooperatively and show pride in their work. They develop very good entrepreneurial skills, learning how to raise funds and to make a profit through mini-enterprise projects. The pupils take on responsibilities well. The school council meets regularly and raises funds for charities.”

In May 2008 when discussion took place as to the possible focus of this PLW module, I once again referred to our Warwick CEI Excellence in Enterprise audit and highlighted the need to engage more pupils in entrepreneurial activities to develop financial education and economic understanding. The way forward was identified as inclusion in a local business link project entitled “Make £5 Blossom” which involves a local employer providing a business loan of £150 to a group of 30 children (£5 each) to invest in mini enterprise activities. As we had just signed up for involvement in this project it seemed a useful starting point for this module, hence the title and aims as detailed above.
3. The commentary on each of the core dimensions

i. Engage with the knowledge base

In “The very big picture” (2000) Michael Barber sets out five of the most commonly expressed doubts about the present government’s approach to education reform – the first of which is that …. “The government’s policy is excessively top-down and centralised: it undermines teachers’ professionalism” (Page 15)

I have to admit that, as a senior leader in Primary education, sometimes it can feel as if there is an overload of new initiatives and that we are being led by the need to achieve goals of which we do not feel that we have ownership. It was from this starting point that I began this engagement with the knowledge base to learn more about the rationale of the “economic well-being” strand of Every Child Matters” and to relate this to enterprise education and, in particular the role of business engagement in the Primary classroom.

In response to the above doubt, Barber responds, (Page 16) “It is true that there is a strong drive from the centre in our approach to education reform. We don’t apologise for this. We have promised to create a world class education system, we are providing the resources, and, if we are to take responsibility then we need the power to deliver.”

“As regards teachers’ professionalism, surely at the heart is the capacity to learn best practice identified through research and inspection and then apply it to real children in real classrooms. Professionalism lies neither in deciding the content of the curriculum regardless of the expectations of the wider society nor in making pedagogical decisions without the knowledge or evidence on which to base them”.

Barber clearly sets out a compelling argument for the role that education will play in shaping the future when he states that, (Page 5) “30 or 40 years ago, developed countries could tolerate substantial underperformance in their education systems because there was a plentiful supply of skilled and semi-skilled jobs in the economy. Changes in the global economy mean that that is no longer true.” These words are certainly relevant to the situation that our country finds itself in at present and it is interesting to see the way that enterprise education is becoming the forefront of educational practice across schools within our Local Authority today.

Barber acknowledges that “the present government has never believed that a world class education service could be achieved in a few months or even a few years. It will require an active, urgent, consistent drive over a five to ten year period. All the more reason, therefore to make an energetic start…….”

Nine years on form this statement it will be interesting to explore how the needs of the wider society have shaped education and how research has contributed towards this.
In September 2003 the needs of the wider society certainly impacted upon education with the publication of the “Every Child Matters” Green Paper. The tragic case of Victoria Climbie led to the “Every Child Matters” agenda (DfES 2004) where 5 outcomes formed the core of the policy:

- Be healthy
- Stay safe
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well-being

Whilst the first 4 core values were easily applicable the Primary school through aspects of networking involving groups of schools, the Local Authority and other agencies and organisations, the fifth of these core values, I feel, has been the most problematic for the Primary School – the key question being “How can we support pupils’ economic well-being?

In the NCSL (National College for School Leadership) publication “ECM why it matters to leaders” the economic well-being strand is explained thus: “School’s role here is focused on nurturing children’s aspirations and helping them to set goals and work with other agencies so that they can move effectively into further / higher education and post 16 training. It might also involve their involvement in local regeneration programmes or other community ambitions and fostering social entrepreneurship.”

In September 2005 the current OFSTED section 5 inspections together with school self review became statutory. Within this changed OFSTED framework was the inclusion of the 5 stands of “Every Child Matters” which included specific expectations around enterprise and economic well-being. From this moment on, schools had to face up to the reality that they needed to be able to fulfil this requirement, and for many schools the self review process highlighted this as an area for development.

The inclusion of enterprise into the OFSTED framework had been called for in the Davies “Review of enterprise and the economy in education (2002) where he states that (Page 12) “Ofsted should include an additional question in the next revision of the inspection framework: “How well does the school prepare young people for employability and work (including their enterprise capability)?” stressing that without that underpinning, schools would not find it possible to give enterprise the attention that it deserves and for it to become a mainstream activity.

Therefore it is to the Davies report that I turned for further clarification. Davies predicts that (Page 15) “It is also likely that young people in education now will face greater economic uncertainty and more frequent change in their future working lives than did their predecessors. Against that background, all young people will need more enterprising skills and attitudes, not just to set up businesses (or enter self employment), but also to build their own careers and to stay employable. In addition, enterprise may bee seen as a set of skills attitudes and capabilities which can help weaken the link between economic uncertainty and social exclusion.”
Once again these prophetic words are applicable to the situation that our country finds itself in today and the aspect of social exclusion is certainly what the government wanted to address in meeting the needs of every child, especially the most vulnerable groups, within the Green Paper of 2003. The question remains – “How do we achieve this?”

Davies sets out a clear case for business to play a key role in the education process but acknowledges that “...while teachers are generally supportive of business links, they are uncertain of their own ability to promote enterprise, and need help to do so,” adding that “schools will need time to design enterprise learning experiences for their partnership with business.”

Davies sets out the rationale for an integrated approach to enterprise education, with the emphasis being upon mini-company schemes or enterprise projects which focus on enterprise learning rather than merely enterprise activity.

Unfortunately, considering the development of entrepreneurial skills became an expectation in September 2005, until recently, there seems to have been little support for the Primary school in this area. Most of the publications around enterprise concentrate on the 14 – 19 agenda ignoring what happens before.

However the publication “Starting them young: creating a culture of enterprise for all” (2004) is an attempt to bring together the views of business, politicians and educators to progress the need for enterprise education for very young people. The report suggests that schools should work in partnership with businesses in order to create a new enterprise culture.

It is from this basis that I embarked upon my change activity – to develop and evaluate the effectiveness of engaging business partnerships within the primary school enterprise curriculum in meeting the challenges of the economic well-being strand of “Every Child Matters”.

With the support of the Rotherham Ready partnership and the “Make £5 Blossom scheme” I was ready to make my ….. “energetic start”! 
**ii. Planning of a change activity**

Following liaison with Rebecca Mollart from Rotherham Ready I enrolled our school for inclusion with two “Make £5 Blossom” business enterprise initiatives. My aims were as follows:

The aims:

- To develop effective local business links in order to enhance our existing enterprise curriculum
- To evaluate the business partnerships in terms of pupil and parental perception and to use this action research as a basis for future action planning.
- To evaluate the wider picture across the Local Authority

The success criteria:

- 2 local businesses to be actively involved in the development of the pupils entrepreneurial skills (The Big 13)
- That parental understanding of enterprise in school should increase
- That pupils will have a positive response to learning opportunities created
- Collated data to provide a clear evidence base

The research methods that I decided to use were as follows:

- To assess the impact of the business links against the 13 skills of enterprise as identified in the Rotherham Ready document “The big 13,” and to use the Warwick Platinum case study assessment format.
- To repeat the use of the “Every Child Matters” questionnaire that we had originally used in December 2006 in order to gauge impact.
- To use a pupil questionnaire at the end of the project in order to gauge pupil response
- To collate the OFSTED grades for local mainstream Primary Schools from section 5 inspections and relate the results to quantifiable data regarding enterprise training, business engagement through the “Make £5 Blossom” scheme, and the award of Warwick and Warwick Platinum Excellence in Enterprise Education.

In terms of Lewins Force field analysis, I anticipated that the barriers to the success of this project would be the already overloaded curriculum, staff commitment, the organisation of mini projects for individual children, and the engagement of the parents and pupils. Therefore, in order to reverse these possible restraining forces, I decided to link both aspects of the change activity to events already planned – the Summer Fair and the School’s 25th birthday. Pinning the project on clear dates within the school calendar as well as within the rigorous time constraints of the “Make £5 Blossom” timescale would therefore provide the drive to initiate, carry out and complete the change activity within a given time frame. In terms of organisation, rather than targeting 30 individual pupils with a £5 challenge, I decided to share the investment money equally between classes – therefore involving more pupils and staff, but without the organisational features becoming unmanageable for all concerned. In addition, because these events would be high profile in terms of parental and pupil involvement, it would be possible to engage pupils fully and highlight to parents the positive features of the enterprise work being carried out in school. As regards the staff commitment together with the already overloaded curriculum, a focused cross curricular approach would be necessary to drive the initiative forward. Certainly the expectation that all classes would be involved in the Summer Fair would ensure the engagement of all staff at some level.
Project timeline (Appendix 5)

**iii. Carrying out a change activity**

To initiate the first business engagement across school, we held a special assembly where representatives from Voluntary Action Rotherham came to visit the children. We explained that each class would have £20 to spend (£10 having been included from school funds to give all 8 classes the same amount) and that any profit made from the Summer fair would be used to buy resources for the whole. In classrooms the children then began to develop their enterprising skills developing games and activities, or making products for our stalls. The stalls ranged from Treasure maps and guessing games to tables selling products specifically designed and made by the children. One particularly successful project was the designing and making of Top Trumps cards. Initially the children began by playing Top Trumps in the classroom – indeed we never knew that there were so many variations! Then we introduced monster characters which we named and gave attributes. As our maths curriculum topic was measures at that time, I assumed that the children would choose height, weight etc… as the attributes – but the children wanted even the youngest pupils to be able to play and so chose attribute such as intelligence, skill and power. Each attribute was given a score between 0 and 10 to ensure that the most pupils would be able to play. The children typed in the characteristics and names, and printed them out. We then involved a parent who is a local businessman to set up a production line activity along the corridor, with some children putting colour copies into laminating pouches, some laminating(!), and others cutting and packaging! Phew!!! The children then marketed their product by playing the games at playtime with the younger children in order to generate interest. On the day of the Summer fair the whole school community were involved – pupils, parents, governors, teachers, teaching assistants, the caretaker etc… Despite the bad weather forcing the event in doors it was a great success! Through this activity the pupils were able to develop their enterprising skills but also were able to see that the whole school community can have fun working together and that it is challenging work raising funds to pay for the many resources that we use on a daily basis in school. The children learned that everything has a value and that it is important to look after our school and its environment.

Throughout the project, the acquisition of enterprise language and the development of enterprise skills were assessed by the teachers through close discussion with pupils. The activity was a very worthwhile experience and it was wonderful to see that all the children, even the very youngest in the Foundation Stage could contribute to such a worthwhile event. At the closing presentations for the “Make £5 blossom project – it was very satisfying to see 2 of our Y2 children speak to an invited group of people – a very proud moment indeed!

At the end of the first business engagement I was able to reflect purposefully upon the outcomes. Pinning the project upon a key date in our school calendar (the Summer Fair) had given impetus to the project. Also the time constraints and the agreed commitment to an externally funded venture had certainly maintained the profile and pace of the project. All the staff and pupils had been actively involved in enterprise activities, however the scale of the project didn’t lend itself to more in depth professional coaching opportunities, and as such the enterprise learning opportunities were variable across the school. In addition, the business partnership which had begun so positively fell a little flat towards the end because the 2 representatives from the business were unfortunately unable to attend either the Summer Fair or the closing presentations. I discussed my findings with the Rotherham Ready Team and resolved that the next business engagement would develop more fully the link between our school and the place of work.

In order to initiate the 2nd business engagement 2 pupils and 1 member of staff attended the Make £5 blossom launch to meet our business partners from Horner Brother Print Group and
to receive our £150 business loan. The money was then divided equally between 3 classes (£50 per class) and the children were introduced to the idea of using the money in order to make a profit. The children were then encouraged to design stalls that would be interesting and exciting for our School Birthday Jamboree, and working within a budget, in small working teams developed items to sell and games in which all the children in school could participate. The children worked collaboratively in small teams, making decisions and solving problems along the way. They were also encouraged to develop their financial literacy in terms of recognising coins, working out break evens, making calculations in a real life context and giving change. We also used this work as a useful opportunity to develop simple marketing strategies as used in commercial business outlets. One of our parents, who works for Marks and Spencers brought into school some surplus advertising materials for us to use as a basis for discussion and to make our stalls look attractive. We learned that in large retail outlets some assistants wear badges to advertise a promotion – for example “ask me about win, win, win!” Therefore some children designed badges with our tag line “Everyone’s a winner!” Alongside this initiative, Horner Brothers also offered the children a unique opportunity to design a Christmas card – 3 of which would be professionally printed and sold to make a profit for school funds. Initially all the children discussed possible designs for Christmas cards and the criteria that make card designs successful – bright, colourful, attractive and clear. Following initial discussion the children then chose to work in 2 different ways. 2 classes designed individual Christmas cards and then through a process of careful decision making voted for the card that they thought would be the most popular design for people to buy. In this process reaching a decision that all the children were happy with was important. In the 3rd class the children decided that we would sell more cards if everyone was included in the design – in the same way that we have designed fund raising tea towels in the past. Therefore each child contributed a picture of themselves around a “Peace on Earth” theme. All the children took turns to add colour to the finished design, ensuring that it was bright, clear and attractive. The importance of working as a team and all doing our best was crucial! John Fox from Horner Brothers then came to school to meet the children and discuss the winning designs, before they were processed, printed and packaged for us. The finished products then became a key feature of the School Birthday Jamboree, where the children designed posters and labels to advertise their products. The event was also publicised clearly in newsletters sent home to parents, and the local radio station also took an interest in the business link that we had created and featured it in an interview with me on RotherFM. All the children took on board various roles and responsibilities both in the week leading up to the event and on the day of the Jamboree itself. John Fox and Christine Mullan from Horner Brothers also attended the Jamboree and supported our initiative by helping the children to run their stalls. Our Event began at 3-15 and by 4-00 it was a complete “sell out”! Our efforts raised a final profit of £750 – quite an amazing achievement! Our successful engagement with local business was then celebrated by a formal press release including a photograph of John Fox with the competition winners. The event was then followed by a representative number of children from each of the 3 classes being given the opportunity to visit Horner Brothers Print Group in order to see at first hand the process of printing our cards. As these events took place in the period leading up to, and including National Enterprise week, the outcomes of our work were presented in the form of a photo story and submitted for an Enterprise competition – our entry was runner up to the first prize and has earned us a prize of £100!!!! The culmination of this highly successful employer engagement will took place on Thursday 11th December with our closing presentations at Rockingham Professional Development Centre, where 2 children were given the opportunity to celebrate our success and make a formal “Thank you” before an invited audience.

In reflecting upon the outcomes of the 2nd business engagement I was able to see that it had been a much more rounded experience. In the first instance the children were able to relate to the idea of a printing business. The printing of books and cards etc… is within the children’s frame of reference, and although I would not wish to limit the range of businesses that the children work alongside, I do think it is important that such young children can understand
exactly what the business people do as their work, and that it has relevance to real life. Secondly the representatives from the business were involved at every stage of the project and showed a real commitment to the way in which they were involved in school. Providing the children with the opportunity to have their Christmas card designs professionally printed not only increased the possible profit made but also gave some of the children a practical reason to visit Horner Brothers and to see their cards being produced. Once again pinning the project on an event within the school calendar, together with the external financial commitment and designated timescale gave the project impact and momentum. In addition the many opportunities that were provided for us to publicise the event via the local and National media raised the profile of the project quite significantly from the perspective of the staff, parents and pupils alike.

In comparison with the first employer engagement, the smaller number of staff involved in this project led to a more in depth personal coaching opportunity which is not possible with larger numbers of staff across a whole school due to the constraints of time to liaise. This in turn certainly impacted upon the quality of the learning experiences in terms of developing quality enterprise learning rather than merely setting up enterprise activity.
iv. **Evaluating the impact on practice / own learning**

I have chosen to evaluate the impact of my project in relation to the three original objectives outlined at the beginning of this document.

1. **To develop effective local business links in order to enhance the existing enterprise curriculum**

In terms of developing local business links, participation in the two “Make £5 Blossom” schemes certainly extended and enhanced our existing enterprise curriculum in a very positive way. It afforded us the opportunity to engage the whole school in mini enterprise activities – where all pupils were actively engaged in planning, producing and selling products with a specific focus on money and finance (albeit at different levels depending upon age and understanding).

The key for me, in reflecting upon my learning, is the word *effective*. For a business link to be truly effective, a mutual commitment is required from both the school and the business. Representatives from the business need to meet the children and take an interest in what learning is taking place within school. In the case of very young children (e.g., Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1) it also helps if the business involved is something either relevant to, or within the frame of reference of the younger child in order to develop understanding. Pinning the project upon a key date in the school calendar gives impetus, and clear time constraints within an externally funded venture certainly increase the pace of the project and maintain momentum. If possible, a clearly planned visit to the business premises to see at first hand what takes place in the working environment is an added bonus, and really sets the children’s learning in context.

The success of business engagement is also clearly dependent upon staff commitment. The project needs to be manageable and considering the already overloaded curriculum, a focused, well planned cross curricular approach (as outlined in the Davies review) is necessary to drive the initiative forward. Also key is the professional development with staff. Professional coaching opportunities appear to be the best way forward, although in planning any programme of staff development, as a senior leader in school, it is important to be mindful of staff changes and movement of staff across year groups. Rarely, in a school, do staff structures remain the same for an extended period. Therefore it can never be assumed that, without continued professional development, that the quality of provision will be consistent.

Reflecting upon the 2 projects which took place in our school, the greatest difference for me was the way in which the second business link enabled us to develop more fully the children’s enterprise **learning** through the 13 enterprise skills, as identified in the Rotherham Ready “Big 13” publication. At the beginning of the project 2 children were encourage to assess themselves against the 13 enterprise capabilities using an assessment wheel devised by Catherine Brentnall, and this process was repeated at the end of the project (Appendix 6). From this process it was evident that the children thought that their skills had increased in the areas of leadership, teamwork, negotiating and influencing, organisation / planning skills, creativity and innovation, risk management, making judgements, product service and design, financial literacy and effective communication. However they thought that their skills...
in the areas of decision making / problem solving and positive attitude had stayed the same, and that initiative should have a lesser score because they had over estimated their capability in the first instance. I had chosen to carry out this assessment with only 2 children as the language involved and the format were not conducive to use with all the pupils. However the powerful nature of the discussion and the information gathered in turn led me to consider how we could enable the children to be more actively involved in their own learning through “Assessment for Learning”, and how the 13 enterprise skills could form the basis for the development of a “skills” based curriculum in the future.

As a result, during the “Rotherham Ready resources day” (13/01/09) I began working with Catherine Brentnall (Rotherham Ready Project Officer) on mapping Assessment for Learning statements to each of the 13 key skills of enterprise and making connections between these skills and the stands of Every Child Matters and secondary PLTS. The fact that the resources day had been organised as cross phase (involving colleagues with experience from Foundation Stage to Key Stage 5) enabled purposeful discussion and the document soon extended from a Year group document for the Primary school into a document which encapsulated the enterprise entitlement across all phases. We drew upon a wide range of Assessment for Learning statements which had been drawn up by Enterprise Champions in local focus groups (such as the “Early Years Focus Group” of which I am an active participant). By the end of the day we had the basis for a working document of use to all schools. Catherine Brentnall then sought feedback about the document from other working parties and through consultation it was modified to form the current “Enterprise skills development phase” document (Appendix 7). An unexpected outcome of the change activity therefore, was the production of this document in its current format which has been professionally printed and will be available to all schools through the Rotherham Ready website (www.rotherhamready.org.uk). This purposeful experience has stressed to me the importance of cross phase networking and the need for us, as practitioners, to understand that we are part of a continuum of learning which requires strategic planning to ensure consistency in provision and effective transfer.

Following the success of the “Enterprise skills development phase” document and as a result of continued professional dialogue with other Enterprise Champions and representatives for Rotherham Ready, I am now planning to develop a simplified “Enterprise Passport” for the children to use in the classroom. Each time a child has evidenced that they have achieved an identifiable skill in their enterprise learning they can mark it on their passport with a smiley face. If that skill is achieved 4 times they will then be awarded with a sticker. It is hoped that this will encourage pupils to work towards achieving all 13 skills rather than just refining a small range of them. Indeed when our school entered the National Enterprise week competition in November we resolved that if we won, our prize money would be put to use in another enterprise project and the profits would be used to have Assessment for Learning resources professionally printed. This activity could certainly form the basis of a future research project.

Another way in which I was able to assess the impact of the change activity was via the completion of the Warwick University Platinum Award documentation (Appendix 8). This enabled me to evaluate the success of the change activity by using it as the focus for 2 case studies – The “Employer engagement case study” and the
“Community / social enterprise” case study. The Warwick format enabled me to go through the process of a formal documented assessment of the change activity using specific headings and setting what was learned in the context of clearly focused school development planning (Appendix 9). Indeed the subsequent achievement of the Warwick Platinum Award for Excellence in Enterprise Education was the culmination of a very purposeful evaluation process.

2. To evaluate the business partnerships in terms of pupil and parental perception and to use this action research as a basis for future action planning.

In order to gauge the perception of parents about enterprise in school, it seemed appropriate to use the format of the original “Every Child Matters” questionnaire that we had used in December 2006 when our “Enterprise” journey began. The comparison was very favourable indeed (Appendix 10). 80% of the parents who responded to the questionnaire felt that we were an enterprising school (an increase of 22%), no parents felt that we were not an enterprising school in comparison to 2% last time, and although 20% responded with “Don’t know”, this was still a drop of 20%, which was a positive result. Interestingly, most of the parents who responded with “Don’t know” and were willing to put their name on the questionnaire, were parents of pupils new to our school, and as such their children had not participated in the change activities. As our school an Infant school (Foundation Stage, Year 1 and Year 2) our entire pupil population changes every 3 years. From this I have learned that our consultation process needs to be an on-going cycle, and that we constantly need to make stakeholders aware of what is going on in school, and “flag up” our achievements through newsletters, displays, celebration events and continued media involvement. Certainly the many media opportunities, organised for us by the Rotherham Ready Team, which took place as part of the project, helped to raise the profile of the work being carried out. The Rotherham Ready newsletters, local radio broadcast, and numerous publicity opportunities in the local press, together the award of Warwick Platinum and local celebration events were certainly key to the 22% increase in positive parental perception. Therefore I have learned that it is important to be proactive about media involvement.

In order to gauge the perception of pupils about enterprise within school, it seemed appropriate to use a simple pupil questionnaire. There were 52 replies which indicated an overwhelmingly positive response (Appendix 11). Indeed 94% were pleased with the profit that we made and 96% would like to make more money. Some of the responses were more subjective – for example when I questioned one child about why they didn’t like the games they replied “Because I didn’t win anything”. Also 31% of pupils said that they didn’t buy any of the Christmas cards. On closer inspection most of these children were from faiths other than Christian, therefore non-denominational products might be more successful in future. Indeed we are planning to make an “Around the world cookbook” this term which may prove to be even more popular.

If I was to carry out this process again, I would devise a pupil questionnaire which could be used at the beginning and then again, at the end of a project. This would give
more detailed analysis of how pupils’ perceptions have changed over a fixed period of time.

3. To evaluate the wider picture across the local Authority by gauging the impact of purposeful business links within the Primary School Enterprise curriculum upon the statutory expectations placed upon Primary Schools within the current Section 5 OFSTED framework.

As part of my learning I wanted to evaluate the wider picture of Enterprise education across mainstream Primary Schools within the Local Authority – particularly the way in which local schools had performed within the “Economic well-being” strand of the “Every Child Matters” agenda as evidenced through Section 5 OFSTED inspections and, if possible, gauge the impact of business involvement upon this data.

The OFSTED Section 5 reports of 100 local mainstream Primary Schools (Appendix 12) provided clear numerical data for interrogation in viewing the wider picture across the Local Authority. 21% of the schools were given a score of 1 (Outstanding), 40% a score of 2 (Good), 37% received a score of 3 (Satisfactory), 1% a score of 4 (inadequate) and 1% had not had a recent inspection under the revised Section 5 framework.

Of the 61% of schools which were graded good or outstanding 36% had shown a commitment to being actively involved in the Rotherham Ready “Make £5 Blossom” business engagement scheme.

Interestingly, by comparing the scores awarded for the pupils positive contribution to the community as well as the “Economic well-being” strand it was evident that 44% received the same score in each category, 7% received a higher score for “economic well-being”, 47% received a lower score for “economic well-being”, with 1% having no current data available. This would suggest that for most schools, the positive contribution that they make to the community is not matched with how well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being. However, in the main, schools that developed skills that were contributing to future economic well being were also making a positive contribution to the community.

Unfortunately the data collated did not accurately demonstrate a causal link between business engagement and OFSTED’s assessment of “How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being”, because I had only collated available data for the “Make £5 Blossom” partnerships, and some schools may be meeting that objective in other ways. Also a correlation between the date of the inspection and the date of the business engagement would be necessary to gauge real impact. Nevertheless it was a purposeful process which has produced a document which highlights areas of excellence. This in itself is useful when schools are seeking partners in order to share good practice.

In conclusion it has to be said that 57% of the 21 schools which were deemed by OFSTED to be outstanding in the “economic well-being” category had undertaken the Warwick University Excellence in Enterprise audit process, and subsequently gained
the Warwick Award. This high percentage perhaps indicates that it is the focused audit and action planning, which will necessarily involve business engagement such as the “Make £5 Blossom” scheme, which is most successful process for schools to undertake.

It would appear that the Davies review (2002) was right to recommend that enterprise be included in the OFSTED inspection framework as without this expectation schools would certainly not have found it possible to give enterprise the attention that it deserves and for it to become such a mainstream activity.
v. **Dissemination**

On 4\(^{th}\) December I was able to share my learning with Craig Grewcock (Regional Director at the Centre for Education and Industry (CEI), University of Warwick) as part of our assessment visit for the Warwick University Platinum Award. Craig, as ever, was very interested in finding out about our experiences and the learning (my own and that of the pupils) that had ensued as a result. He has asked me if I am willing to be part of future dissemination projects relating to Warwick University, and I look forward to supporting this in any way that I can.

I have enjoyed the support of all the Rotherham Ready team and the PLW group in developing ideas, seeking advice and sharing feedback at every stage of this learning process. Indeed this process would have been unimaginable without the peer support of Catherine Brentnall, Rebecca Mollart and Jackie Frost from “Rotherham Ready”. They facilitated the setting up of our business links and were eager to receive purposeful feedback from our experiences as part of their continued developments throughout the Local Authority. Indeed such was the success of our 2\(^{nd}\) business partnership, that I have been invited to present my thoughts regarding purposeful business partnerships at a flagship event in Rotherham, together with John Fox (Horner Brothers Print Group) and 2 pupils. On 11\(^{th}\) March we are to showcase our findings to an invited audience from Rotherham Schools, local businesses and national education leaders including Mick Waters (from QCA).

Catherine Brentnall has also requested that PLW projects be placed on the Rotherham Ready website for the benefit of a wider audience.

At present I am a member of a working party looking into “Transforming Rotherham Learning 0-19” as part of the Building Schools for the Future project. I would hope that I can disseminate some of my findings to the group as we develop a core entitlement for pupils in Rotherham schools, as effective business partnerships and the development of the skills related to economic well-being will continue to be a priority for the development of education.

From the school’s perspective, what I have learned will have a very positive impact upon future business engagement opportunities, as I now know how to maximise their potential. Indeed, it will form the basis for the continuous development of our curriculum in order to ensure that our pupils receive an education which will develop the skills necessary for the changing world in which we live. It is also hoped that our school will achieve Leading Aspect Status for enterprise education at some point in the future.
vi. **Accessing peer support, coaching and/or mentoring**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Role</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Catherine Brentnall</td>
<td>Rotherham Ready Project Officer.</td>
<td>Catherine has been a constant source of support and guidance throughout our School’s Enterprise journey, and not least as a sounding board throughout this personal external learning opportunity. Her role as a mentor has enabled me to view not only my work but also my learning within a much wider local and national context.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebecca Mollart</td>
<td>Rotherham Ready School Liaison Officer</td>
<td>Rebecca has been instrumental in setting up our 2 successful business partnerships, and in providing a focus for the development of Assessment for learning in Enterprise through the Early Years / Key stage 1 and Key stage 2 focus groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amanda Evans</td>
<td>Rotherham Ready Project Finance Officer</td>
<td>Amanda has been supportive in terms of supplying data relevant to the wider evaluation across the Local Authority.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jackie Frost</td>
<td>Rotherham Ready Project Manager</td>
<td>Along with Rebecca Mollart, Jackie has been instrumental in setting up our 2 successful business partnerships, and in providing the driving force for the project by setting it within the context of clear negotiated commitments and rigorous timescales.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rotherham Ready Team</td>
<td>As above</td>
<td>Jackie, Rebecca and Catherine have also ensured that our project has received maximum publicity which has impacted greatly upon the positive image of the project in terms of pupil / parental perception, and the image of our school at the heart of the local community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Authority Enterprise Champions</td>
<td>Networking opportunities provided via the programme of continued professional development from Rotherham Ready have enabled me to discuss and develop my thoughts about ways forward for our school.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catherine Brentnall et al</td>
<td>Professional Learning in the Workplace group</td>
<td>This forum has provided a sounding board for the development of ideas and the formulation of a tight focus for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Organization/Role</td>
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<tr>
<td>Craig Grewcock</td>
<td>Regional Director at the Centre for Education and Industry (CEI), University of Warwick.</td>
<td>Craig has been a source of inspiration and support in the development of Enterprise within our school. The Warwick University audit and development documentation together with Craig’s in-depth assessment, analysis, and support have been vital in the development of Enterprise throughout our school, and subsequently upon my own learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annette Lax and Carole Brookes</td>
<td>Rotherham Voluntary Action</td>
<td>Provided our initial £150 business loan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Fox and Christine Mullan</td>
<td>Horner Brothers Print Group - Rotherham</td>
<td>Not only provided our 2nd £150 loan, but also provided the opportunity to further our business link in terms of producing our finished product designs, providing pupil access to their factory and supporting our school, when the opportunities arose, via Local Authority presentations and inclusion in the local and National media.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Bibliography

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The very big picture – Professor Michael Barber (2000)

Making Every Child Matters a reality – Graham Handscomb

Every Child Matters – Change for children HM Government 2006


Starting them young: creating a culture of enterprise for all - The Smith Institute 2004

Rotherham Ready – The big 13 (Enterprise entitlement through the curriculum
5. Appendices:

1. Results of “Every Chid Matters” parental survey (December 2006)

2. Action Plan from “Every Chid Matters” parental survey (December 2006)

3. Warwick CEI Excellence in Enterprise application (submission date July 2007)


5. Project timeline.

6. Pupil skills assessment wheel

7. Enterprise skills development phase


10. Parental survey results

11. Pupil survey results

12. Local Authority OFSTED Section 5 inspection data related to the Rotherham Ready “Inspire” Training