Case Study

Establishment name: Reedley Primary School
Lancashire no. 13/036
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Award granted: Innovative Practice
Project title: 'Reedley Real Life'

Project summary
We wanted to give the children a 'real life' experience to assist their economic education and encourage their aspirations.

The main focus was to select and apply for a job, go to work for a day, get paid and organise finances just like we do in the real world! We wanted the children to understand why it was important to work for a living.

Monday – Job Application
Over 20 jobs were advertised. KS2 children applied for a job.

Tuesday – Interviews
Successful candidates attended a 'real' interview. Unsuccessful children had circle time to discuss feelings of rejection. They were then given the opportunity to sign up for night school – a chance to improve.

Wednesday – Work
Children went to work or night school!

Thursday – Pay Day
All workers received their wage. Night school attendees were given a grant and the rest collected a small amount from the government!

The children had to pay for everything - playtime cost 5 Reedley pounds! There were opportunities to spend money on luxury activities i.e. Cinema, Cyber Café.

Friday – Reflections
The children had time to reflect, celebrate and aspire by dressing up in 'career clothes'!

The project had a huge impact on children and staff alike. The children learnt so much about the world of work; it introduced them to new feelings and emotions and
gave plenty of enjoyment.

**Specific aspect of practice to be accredited?**

When the 'economic' aspect was introduced to PSHE we felt we wanted to do something different that would have a real impact on the children. The majority of our children are from very poor backgrounds, (the LSIP Socio-Economic Indicators show 70.1% of children at a multiple deprivation figure of D and below, with 38.4% at E and E*) and had little understanding about personal finances, lacked any aspiration, had no positive role models.

In previous years we have had a successful 'jobs fair' and we turned the school into a business centre, (each class were given £10 and they had to make a profit) but we felt our children needed more real life learning - hence Reedley Real Life!

We first decided what jobs the children could actually do around school and came up with over 20 jobs. These included Assistant Headteacher, Welfare Assistants (where they helped with lunchtime), Nursery Nurses (where they spent the day helping out in our foundation unit), Reprographics Operator (photocopying for the teachers), Typist (given the school newsletter to type up)! We then put together job specifications so the children could see what skills and qualifications were needed for the roles (for instance, the Reading Advisors needed to be a level 4 at reading so they had a positive impact on the children in KS1, who they helped to read). We also advertised the wage they would be paid for the day. We tried to teach the children the following real life experiences:-

- You need to choose a job where the skills and qualifications match your strengths and interests, as you are more likely to be successful.
- The harder you work, the better grades you are more likely to get which could lead you on the path to a better paid job.
- How to fill in a job application form and experience of completing it
- Writing practice for a different audience.

We then had to select the staff that would be the children's line managers (e.g. Assistant Headteacher's line manager was the Headteacher, the typist line manager was the school secretary etc.). These members of staff had to shortlist the candidates and then interview the children. This was a brilliant speaking and listening opportunity for the children with a real outcome. Furthermore it gave them insight to the interview procedure!

The children who were unsuccessful at interview were given circle time with our Learning Mentor to discuss their feelings of rejection. We all experience failure at some point in our life and this was real opportunity to discuss how to deal with it. We then gave the children the opportunity to sign up for night school – either extra Numeracy, Literacy or Science lessons which took place at playtime (i.e. their own time). The message we were trying to deliver was if you try and improve yourself, you are more likely to succeed the next time round!
The children that were successful at interview were given an induction about what their work day was and what it would involve, how they could prepare and parents were informed so children came to school in appropriate working clothes. This also gave the children an opportunity to share something with their families at home!

We then had to produce Reedley money, wage slips and organise the costs for the day's activities on pay day, so the children had something exciting to spend their money on alongside compulsory items – thus giving them the concept of bills and budgeting. We wanted the children on government help (those that had not applied for a job or who wanted to give some of their extra time to enhance their learning at night school) to only be able to afford the school's necessities such as equipment and lunch to try and give the message of working for a living means you can afford more leisure activities! We set up a cinema with popcorons and drinks, a cyber café with laptops, internet and refreshments, a sports activity plus the opportunity to buy healthy snacks at playtime. The children had to work out what they could afford after paying their bills (school compulsory items such as equipment and lunch). This gave a brilliant real life numeracy problem to solve and show how you have to earn the money to be able to spend it.

We set up reflection groups on Friday, one for the workers, one for the children that went to night school and one for the children who didn’t participate in anything. We were amazed by the children’s comments and how much they had got out of the experience. So many said they needed to spend more time and effort on their application form, or answer more clearly at interview, their feelings when some people had more or less money than them and what they could do about it. They said it gave them great motivation to do better at school and aim for high SATS results in order to get a good job – in particular the government support group! Whilst we all recognised KS2 SATs results are the culmination of sustained good quality and imaginative first teaching, the 2010 KS2 results were significantly better than 2009, with 74% achieving Level 4 & above in English, and 79% achieving Level 4 & above in Maths, and 31% achieving a Level 5 in English and in Maths.

Finally we celebrated the project by allowing children to dress up in clothes showing what they wanted to be when they were older.

Due to the success of the project, the two children who were appointed to the Assistant Headteacher roles were invited to present the project to the Full Governing Body. They spoke without notes and took questions! Ten children from Year 6 then reported on the project to the Connecting Communities Group. They presented to Jan Styn, Strategy Manager for East Lancashire, Neighbourhood Management, Pendle Council and members of Brierfield and Reedley Town Council. The children again spoke without notes, took questions and responded to assumptions made by the audience.
Aspect of Every Child Matters addressed:
- Be healthy
- Stay Safe
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well-being

What were you hoping to achieve?
- Economic Awareness
- Insight to bills and budgeting
- Managing personal finances
- Making choices
- Dealing with positive and negative feelings such as success and failure
- Job aspirations
- Enjoyment
- ECM
- Cross curricular opportunities – Literacy, Numeracy, Speaking & Listening
- Insight to how the country works i.e. income support, bills, further education etc. thus increasing general knowledge
- Using money to pay/buy things
- Job application and interview experience
- Meeting people in the community
- Whole School Project to help create unison, thus a positive ethos amongst both pupils and staff
- Confidence to share experiences and reflections with variety of audiences
- 'A Real Life' experience
- Reflecting on the choices you make.

How did you identify the need for this practice?
- To cover the economic aspect of PSHE.
- School profile data – how many of our parents do not work for a living, deprivation, lack of positive role models, grim home environment, lack of aspiration
- To enable us to have a 3 year economic whole school project cycle

Briefly describe the main characteristics of the school?
We are a school of 271, with 70.1% at D & below on the multiple deprivation indicators (LSIP). This is a massive increase on the figure of 41.8% only three years previously. In three years from 2005/6 the number of the children with EAL rose from 65 to 195. 3% of the children were in care as opposed to the Lancashire average of 0.4%. Children with SEN have risen to 20.3% against 14.2% in 2005/6. The community it serves have seen massive changes over the last five years. Pendle as a borough fell 42 places in four years, to be the 29th poorest borough in England. One of the greatest areas of concern is the area of Brierfield and Reedley. It is the place with the greatest concerns re community cohesion, hence the work of the Good Relations Team and the Connecting communities Project with LCC and the Neighbourhood Management Team.
What did you do?

See above! We have managed whole school projects for the last few years, in the 'Going for Goals' section of SEAL i.e. jobs fair and creating a class business. We wanted to think of a 3rd project, so not only could we run a 3 year cycle, but have something that would have instant impact on the children in terms of learning, aspiration and encouraging values.

So at Christmas 2010, the Headteacher was approached with the initial idea, she was very positive and encouraging.

All the paper based work such as the job descriptions, making the money, thinking of the luxury items to spend their money on were planned and created. The staff were briefed at a staff meeting, who then came up with more ideas for jobs etc.

We also had to think of a way to include KS1 because we wanted the whole school involved. We decided they could earn money by doing good work, by putting in lots of effort etc. Then on pay day, they had to count their money and work out what they could afford to do as in KS2. They were also part of Friday's reflections and celebrations.

In the 'Reedley Real Life' week our literacy lessons were used for the job application and interviews as they had a literacy focus and numeracy lesson to count/sort money and wages.

Which members of the establishment and/or wider community have been involved and what was their role?

All staff at school were involved in the project in terms of knowing what was happening, taking part in lessons by filling the application form in and giving top tips for interview etc. This gave a strong, whole school feeling and contributed to a sense of belonging.

The staff involved in being a line manager really got involved and gave the children a real interview including writing their own success/rejection letters. Many line managers commented on how it enhanced their relationships with children, i.e. seeing them in a different light, and gave them the opportunity to get to know other children in school, not necessarily from their class or department.

Our PSCO's came to school that day to assist our 'Community Safety Officers' who were responsible for safety in the playground. They provided excellent role models for our children.

The Governors became involved in the project as in one of our governors meetings, as part of the Headteacher's report, some of our 'workers' came to present to the board of governors their experiences and the impact it had on their learning. This was an opportunity for the children to get to know our governors and vice versa.
The project was then reported in the local newspaper which gave the children and parents a sense of achievement.

As a result of the project, ten children from year 6 then reported on the project to the Connecting Communities Group. They presented to Jan Styn, Strategy Manager got East Lancashire, Neighbourhood Management, Pendle council and members of Brierfield and Reedley Town Council. The children spoke without notes, took questions and responded to assumptions made by the audience.

**How has the progress of the project been monitored and evaluated?**

Throughout the week we closely monitored the children’s reactions to the project and our Learning Mentor was on hand to help with any children that it got too much for.

The project was evaluated through the reflection sessions we did!

Visitor comments and interest.

Children ‘s memories

The aftermath of the things we were invited to; to talk about the project i.e. Governors, Connecting Communities Group.

Interest in the local paper.

**How has the practice been modified or improved during development?**

We had to monitor what KS1 were earning so it was in line with KS2

Added more job opportunities.

Added extra circle time to deal with any negative feeling i.e. rejection and feelings of unfairness that some children were being paid more. We felt these were real life feelings and wanted the children to experience them, know it was normal and to be expected. Also we looked at ways of dealing with them whilst they were in a safe and caring environment!

**What has been the impact of the project on pupils’ learning, achievement or enjoyment and how has this been measured?**

The reflections the children made showed how much they had learnt and enjoyed from the project.

Everyday, throughout the week the children left school and couldn’t wait to tell the Headteacher (who stands at the gate at hometime) about it – they were ‘buzzing’!
The children still remember it and talk about it all the time!

It led to a presentation to the Governing Body.

More motivation amongst children to succeed and an awareness that this comes from studying hard.

A change in children's attitudes towards achieving i.e. 'it is now cool to achieve'. It lead to an opportunity to speak to different audiences - i.e. Governors, Connecting Communities Group

Positive comments from parents.

**What are the next stages in the development process?**

- To become part of our 3 year cycle to embed economic learning and aspirations, thus we will be doing 'Reedley Real Life' every 3 years.
- To 'fix it' in 'Jim'll fix it' style for children to actually go out to the workplace i.e. local bank.
- To find more job opportunities for the children so more children have the opportunity to go to work.

**What aspects of this practice may be useful for other establishments to consider?**

- All staff need to be committed to the project to make it as real as possible.
- Give as many job opportunities as possible to maximise the children who can go to work.
- Don't allow the children to give money away or pay for other children to do the activities – however this could be brought up in reflections.