

This essay will discuss the importance of

Education changed after the Second World War, with focus on the working class and social problems, mass schooling intended to provide a gateway of opportunity for those to receive the same chances of future employment as the wealthy (Bilton *et al*, 2002), however competition quickly arose and league tables soon created with the 1988 Education Reform Act (Bailey, 1995). This led to a selection process of higher expectation, as more money was awarded to the higher ranked schools and those students who were deemed as too costly were rejected (Bailey, 1995). This exemplifies how economy is a big driver within education and over the years governments have chosen different ways to spend on education (Pettigrew, 2014). Building Schools for the Future (2004) was an investment into building new schools, in England, with a vision to renew education through innovative and inspired designs tailored to the needs and wants of each school. Such designs were to include adaptable learning environments, flexible learning spaces and classrooms and large spaces for the community to use. However only seven years later, after many overspends and delays this initiative was cancelled which left some councils in England with a loss of investment and studies have shown that Building Schools for the Future investment has made little difference overall to student development (Thomson, 2016). Nuffield Foundation (2018) produced a report in 2018 focussed on a new funding formula being used to ensure a more equal distribution of funding throughout the schools, however this will not be fully in place until 2020/2021. Schools have been taking more responsibility for services that have previously been provided directly by local authorities, which has contributed to a raise in the amount spent per pupil in schools (Nuffield Foundation, 2018).

The Targeted Mental Health in Schools (TaMHS), a nationwide project created to help and support pupils with mental health issues as research shows that pupils achieve far more and better participate when they are happy and with good mental health (Department for children, schools and families, 2008). Understanding what type of support a child needs is important and often this is a barrier to accessing and receiving the correct support, alongside other issues such as availability of counsellors and psychotherapists, funding, and lack of clear expectations (Place2Be, 2018). The World Health Organization (2014) defines mental wellbeing as:

‘a state of wellbeing in which every individual realises his or her own potential,
can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully,
and is able to make a contribution to his or her community’.

This definition highlights how mental health encompasses and involves many areas of life, and Public Health England (2016) state that early intervention can help prevent pupils from entering crisis point which will help to prevent longer, more expensive interventions later on in life. With one in ten children affected by mental health issues it is important for schools to support their pupils by partnering with local agencies, however a majority of these interventions are reactive rather than preventative (Vostanis *et al*, 2013). ‘A child’s capacity and drive for learning is underpinned by emotional security and self esteem’ (Buchan, 2013, pg.58) so addressing the risk factors in a pupil’s life is also an important key to their success within education. A child’s

wellbeing can be affected by many different risk factors, such may include: their family circumstances, relationships, safety of their community or social structures such as poverty (Rosa and Aldgate, 2000). Subjective wellbeing helps 'provide a unique and holistic perspective on life satisfaction, as a whole, or in specific areas' (The Children's Society, no date, pg. 4) and research by Pallini *et al* (2018) links this with a high correlation between the ability to regulate emotions and attachment security. This highlights the need in schools for a wide range of intervention approaches that will cover the wide range of mental issues that its pupils may develop, however counselling has been the main approach in secondary schools (Banerjee *et al*, 2016) and nurture groups in primary schools (OFSTED, 2011). Such approaches aim to help a child's confidence, self-esteem, enhances learning, improves relationships and helps the child improve their learning experience and time at school (Bennatham and Boxall, 2000). Pupils increasingly find it hard to cope with the stress presented by exams and the pressure of school can sometimes be very overwhelming (Young Minds, no date), such stresses can help awaken or develop mental health conditions such as depression, panic attacks, anxiety, low self esteem, self harming or suicidal thoughts (NSPCC, 2017). Emotions, a sense of belonging, physical health and social inclusion all play a vital role in mental wellbeing (Public Health England, 2015) and the Mental Health Foundation (2018) describes good mental health as 'the ability to play a full part in your family, workplace, community and among friends'. Self esteem plays a vital role in wellbeing as too little can develop emotions linked with depression, however high amounts can also be destructive and encourage harmful behaviours (Symonds, 2015). 'Learning involves struggle and adjustment. Too much struggle is overwhelming. Too little struggle means no adjustment' (Roberts, 2006, pg.173) and schools are constantly trying to keep each child balanced between the two, however home life plays a significant role in every child's life.

Local authorities have a legal duty to help every child achieve their educational potential (Local Government Association, 2019a) and are responsible for school standards, admissions, transport and funding (Local Government Association, 2019b). The Department for Education states that it is responsible for protecting and supporting children through local services and helping those who are disadvantaged achieve more. Some of their priorities are to build character, resilience and wellbeing by focussing on those who deliver the teaching and making sure every pound of funding counts (Department for Education, no date). Young Minds (no date) in their Wise Up: Prioritising Wellbeing in Schools document states the need for an education rebalancing as too many teachers and students struggle with the expectations placed on exams, which is outweighing the importance of wellbeing. For those pupils who experience stressful events at home such as parental separation; verbal, mental, sexual or physical abuse; domestic violence; drug and/or alcohol misuse are already living poor quality childhoods (NHS, 2018) and are in need of a safe, nurturing school environment provided by the local authority (Eismann *et al*, 2019). Attachments play an important role in a child's development as they impact future development and influence their success as a social person (Buchan, 2013). Healthy attachments can establish security and belonging from a young age and allow the child to feel comforted (Holmes, 1993) yet not every child has this opportunity and can instead be faced with Adverse Childhood Experiences. Approximately 50,000 children in Wales are exposed to seven or more disadvantages

and around fifty percent experience three or more (Good Childhood Report, 2017). These experiences have long lasting effects and can be detected years later in adulthood (Bradshaw, 2016) so for future wellbeing, addressing ways to better the wellbeing within families and households is vital to create healthier communities (Future Generations Commissioner for Wales, 2018b).

Sustainable development is about ‘the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’ (WCED, 1987, pp. 19). This involves taking steps to create better quality of lives and to increase wellbeing, including within education (Haralambos and Holborn, 2013). In 2022, a new curriculum will be introduced to equip students with the necessary resources to become better active members in society and be adaptable in our ever-constant changing world. Also the aim is for learners to feel more confident, informed, prepared, empowered and resilient for a lifelong participation within their locality (Welsh Government, 2018). In a speech, School Minister Nick Gibb states that education helps

‘to empower its pupils to participate in culture, to succeed in the economy, participate in culture and leave school prepared for adult life... so that every young person has the opportunity to reach their potential and have the knowledge and skills to succeed in a demanding economy’ (Department for Education, 2015).

This will be assessed and promoted as well by the Future Generations Commissioner who will observe whether wellbeing objectives are being met alongside contemplating the effect decisions made today will have upon the future generations (Future Generation Commissioner for Wales, 2018a). Policy is influenced by quality of life and has been given a more prominent role in societal development (Berger-Schmitt, 2000).