



Hidden Curriculum ??



In 1988 the Education Reform Act introduced *the National Curriculum* which:

- Groups knowledge in 4 Key Stages
- Provides information about what children should be taught and when
- Used in all UK schools

The aim is to:

- “promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society
- prepare pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life” (DfEE, 1999)



Hidden Curriculum

It does not mean secret.

It is what **children** have the chance to **learn in school** from outside the National Curriculum programme, like: **the norms, the values, good manners** etc. The school's policies create the school rules which send a message to pupils and their parents. Some of them can be **positive** like: **well done, good job, be punctual, be smart, work hard, behave, you are an important member of school community, be healthy etc.**, but also **negative** like: **you are not good enough, you do not suit this school community** etc.

Both curriculums are very important because they prepare children for adult life.

How does the hidden curriculum work in practice?

Rewards system - based on *Skinner's theory*, that a **reinforcement system** increases the possibility of repeating a positive behaviour and gives better results than punishment. Skinner wrote that reinforcement teaches us what to do whilst punishment only tells us what not to do (McLeod, 2015).



Attendance reward: Children receive a certificate for 100% attendance. The messages are: **attendance is very important (well done, great job)**, but also **you are worse, not good enough (because you were not well, ill or had an appointment)**.

Behaviour reward chart: For children with behaviour problems. After each activity - feedback (😊 for good behaviour, 😊 for not too badly behaved, 😞 for misbehaviour).

- After every good day with all smiley faces – a sticker.
- After three good days – a certificate.
- After a whole good week – a small gift from the teacher's box.

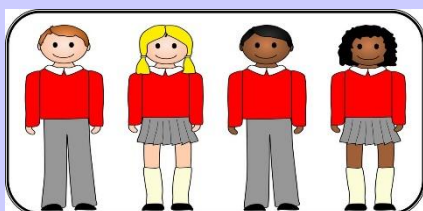


The message is – **working hard, being kind, behaving well is better than misbehaving, you can do it, you are a good boy/girl, you are important to school etc.** but also **you are naughty boy/girl, you will never get it, etc**

Albert Bandura has an alternative view with his *Social Learning theory*. He believed that **children learn by observing indirect consequences**. Thanks to observation they can avoid punishment and copy rewarded behaviour to be rewarded too (Garrett, 2014).

School uniform. Every year parents receive a letter with the **uniform policy** and every child is expected to wear the school uniform.

The message is: **be smart, you are included - not excluded because of background, you are a part of school community, you belong**, but also **your gender identity creates a problem**.



The Healthy Schools initiative is a part of the National Curriculum program. It should be a part of design and technology, Science and Personal and Social education areas and taught through almost every lesson (WAG, 2009).

The Hidden Curriculum promotes a healthy life style by: letters to parents about school policy, considering the contents of the children's lunchboxes, taking part in the sports events, and encouraging them to eat fruit instead of bars or biscuits by providing it in school.

The message is: **be healthy, be active, eat healthily, it is about life style.**

National Curriculum + Hidden curriculum = holistic approach to education.

The Government is still working on the education system to provide the best education for children and ensure that when they leave school they will be prepared for their adult life.

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