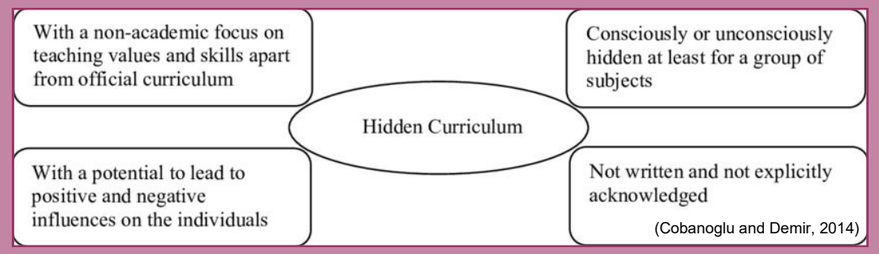
The hidden curriculum?

The hidden curriculum, often referred to as the 'unwritten curriculum' refers to informal, unplanned lessons, values and beliefs that pupils learn within a setting.



Examples of the Hidden Curriculum

- **Values and beliefs** - This element of the hidden curriculum is implemented every day throughout the setting. It includes teaching pupils manners, morals, various religious beliefs. This element is also inclusive of families values The setting also incorporates all families beliefs, and adapts , if possible, accordingly.
- **Parent partnership** - considered an important aspect of the hidden curriculum whereby it is essential that parents/guardians form and develop successful relationships with settings to aid their child's development. Parent partnership is an integral part of the setting, and without parents full cooperation, the setting would be unable to run effectively. Parent partnership desires to promote positive communication between parents and children.
- **Healthy eating** - this is incorporated in a setting in a variety of ways dependant on the values of each particular setting. The chosen setting offers healthy food at snack and meal times and promotes physical activity and fitness.
- **Cultural diversity -** Settings have an ethical responsibility to identify and incorporate different cultures by adapting practice accordingly to suit the individual needs of each child to ensure good practice. However the aspects of integrating this in settings may have unintended effects on children's development dependant on the values and attitudes of each setting

Links between the hidden curriculum and an early years setting

Healthy eating
Multi cultural (Languages)
Social expectations
Multi agency collaboration
Family values and beliefs
Additional learning needs

Forest school

Forest school promotes the social and emotional growth of children through experiential in a outdoor environment. It provides children with the tools required to problem solve and aids them with their holistic development.

Reggio Emilia inspired learning

"The Reggio Emilia philosophy values the child as central to their own learning, not simply an empty vessel waiting to be filled with knowledge. Children are able to pursue their own interests and revisit and build upon ideas at their own pace."

(The Scots Collage, 2017)

Theorists

Functionalists - Emile Durkheim

Functionalists see the hidden curriculum as a positive approach that aids pupils with their social integration within society.

+ +

Marxists - Bowles & Gintis

Focuses of the element of authority within an educational setting. The hidden curriculum is purely preparing pupils for the hierarchy that eventuates within the workplace.

− −

Jerome Bruner

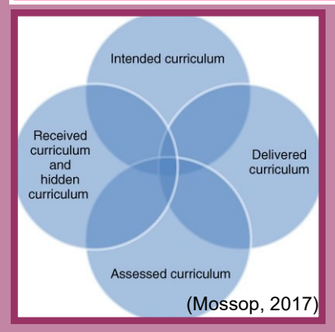
- Introduced the Spiral curriculum.
- Children have to revisited basic concepts regularly in order to process information further down the line.
- Children should be given opportunities to gather information from various methods of learning.
- There is no use in just handing out information as the child will just remember the facts rather than gain more knowledge through exploring the answers.
- Jerome Bruner visited schools who use the Reggio Emilia approach - Very impressed!

Lev Vygotsky

- Social interaction is imperative to support cognitive development.
- Vygotsky believed that every child's development varied widely according to their culture.
- Adults are an essential tool for children to access the information.
- Focused on the environment and cultures being instrumental in children's development.

Bowles and Gintis

- Emphasise that schools focus on social class, rather than social development.
- They believed that the hidden curriculum only enhances social inequality.
- The hidden curriculum teaches children how life is rather than how a person can shape their future.
- Prepares children for a life of conformity and compliance.
-



Further reading

Childdiscoverycenter.org. (2018). *What is the Reggio Emilia Approach? – Child Discovery Center*. [online] Available at: https://childdiscoverycenter.org/non-traditional-classroom/what-is-the-reggio-emilia-approach/.

Humes, W. (2005). *Never discount the hidden curriculum | Tes News*. (Online) Tes.com. Available at: https://www.tes.com/news/never-discount-hidden-

Reference list

Cobanoglu, R. and Demir, C. (2014). *The visible side of the hidden curriculum in schools*. 13th ed. [eBook] Elementary education online, pp.776-778. Available at: http://file:///C:/Users/rachi/Downloads/art_hiddencurriculum_ilkogretimonline.pdf [Accessed 18 Nov. 2018].

College, T. (2017). *What is the Reggio Emilia philosophy?*. [online] Tsc.nsw.edu.au. Available at: https://www.tsc.nsw.edu.au/tscnews/what-is-the-reggio-emilia-philosophy [Accessed 4 Dec. 2018].

Learning teaching Scotland (1999). *The Reggio Emilia approach in Early years education*. Glasgow, pp.2-3.

Kentli, F. (2009). Theoretical analysis on the hidden curriculum for reconceptualization of the hidden curriculum. *European journal of Educational studies*, 1 (2), pp.1-27.

McLeod, S. (2018). *Vygotsky | Simply Psychology*. [online] Simplypsychology.org. Available at: https://www.simplypsychology.org/vygotsky.html [Accessed 17 Nov. 2018].

Mossop, L. (2017). *The Hidden Curriculum*. [online] Veterian Key. Available at: https://veteriankey.com/the-hidden-curriculum/ [Accessed 4 Dec. 2018].

Truman, C. (2015). *Functionalism and Education - History Learning Site*. [online] History Learning Site. Available at: https://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/sociology/education-and-sociology/functionalism-and-education/ [Accessed 19 Nov. 2018].

Childdiscoverycenter.org. (2018). *What is the Reggio Emilia Approach? – Child Discovery Centre*. [online] Available at: https://childdiscoverycenter.org/non-traditional-classroom/what-is-the-reggio-emilia-approach/ [Accessed 18 Nov. 2018].