

Reggio Emilia Schools

ECES6013

By Leanne Dawney

The three levels of the curriculum

There are three levels to the curriculum

- ▶ The planned curriculum
- ▶ The enacted curriculum
- ▶ The experienced curriculum

The planned curriculum is about what knowledge is deemed most worthy.

The 'enacted curriculum' is about how the curriculum should be conducted.

The 'experienced curriculum' is defined as what actually happens in the classroom (Marsh, 2009).



Reggio Emilia vs The Foundation Phase

The Reggio Emilia approach

The approach was developed by Loris Malaguzzi in the town of Reggio Emilia in Italy. He was influenced by theorists such as Vygotsky, Piaget, Montessori and Froebel.

Children's learning is promoted through all of their expressive languages. It is based on a image of a child who has enormous potential and who is the subject of rights (Kinney and Wharton, 2008).

It is for children aged 0-6 years old.

The Foundation Phase

The Foundation Phase is a statutory curriculum in Wales with set areas of learning. Each area has their own set of aims and outcomes.

It is for children aged 3-7 years old (Welsh Government, 2015).

Malaguzzi's Ideas

Key features and factors

- ▶ The image of the child
- ▶ Progettazione
- ▶ The expressive arts
- ▶ Community and parent school relationships
- ▶ The Environment
- ▶ And, teachers as learners (Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2006).

The image of the child

- ▶ The image of the child is a child subject of rights. Educators view children as individuals who have unlimited potential and that are eager to interact and contribute to the world.
- ▶ Children have the right to 'realise and expand' their potential and are driven by curiosity and imagination.
- ▶ They view children as being delighted in being responsible for their own learning and need to be listened to and loved (Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2006).

The Progettazione/Curriculum

Reggio Emilia

The approach is more of a self-guided curriculum based on projects that the children are interested in. Teachers observe children closely in order to understand what interests children the most and build open the children's interests. Topics of study can come from the children's ideas, topics that the teacher know the children will be interested in, from families and from the community (Teaching and Learning Scotland, 2006).

Foundation Phase

Wales do have a specific curriculum to follow with statutory areas of learning that include objectives and aims for learners. Children's views are taken into consideration more within the 'experienced curriculum' and school culture. Whilst they cannot choose what they learn, Foundation Phase classrooms try to create learning activities that will interest the children and different 'learning areas' which the children often get a choice with what area they would like to go to (Welsh Government, 2015). Children's rights are highly emphasised in Wales, it was the first country to make the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child part of its domestic law in 2011. (Children's Commissioner for Wales, date unknown).

The teacher's role

Reggio Emilia

Teachers are co-learners and partners in the learning process. The role of the teacher is to encourage and discover, not control or lead. In order for this process to be effective, teachers need to be attuned to the child's thoughts in order to ask effective open-questions and offer assistance rather than take over or instruct. This is an example of Vygotsky's zone of proximal development (ZPD) (Pound, 2006). Teachers are

- ▶ To Support and encourage children to reflect and question
- ▶ Viewed as a tool in the learning process.
- ▶ And, observe at times or ask children open-ended questions as co-learners (Teaching and Learning Scotland, 2006).

Foundation Phase

In a Welsh classroom, teachers are often viewed as more of a person who imparts knowledge rather than a co-learner. However, they do encourage children to be active learners (Welsh Government, 2015). A method use by many schools is the traffic light system.

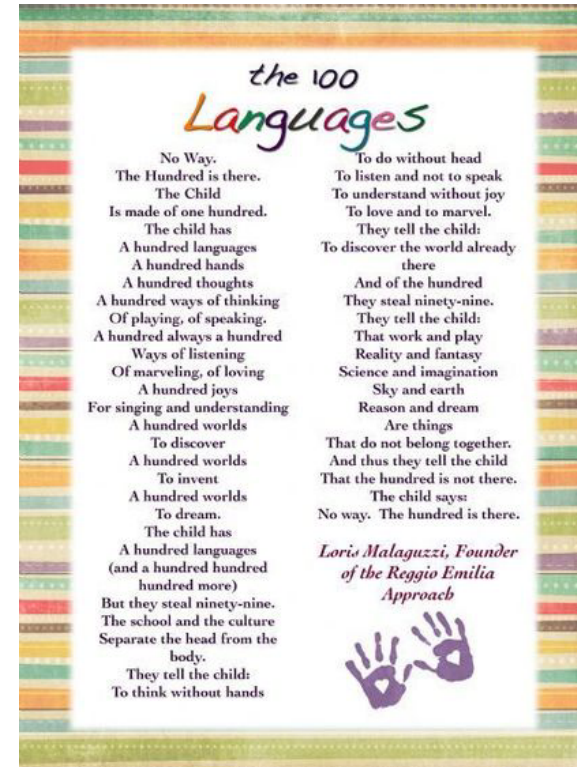
Expressive arts over literacy and numeracy?

Reggio Emilia

- ▶ The arts are used as a vehicle for learning, where are the Foundation Phase quotes using 'play as a vehicle for learning' (Welsh Government, 2015).
- ▶ Children are encouraged to express themselves through a variety of different ways such as drawing, dance, puppetry, music and sculpture (Teaching and Learning, 2006). It is believed that the arts play a key role
- ▶ They acknowledge that imagination is a factor in widening a child's knowledge and understanding of the world
- ▶ The learning process is more important than the final product and therefore the arts allow children to revisit subjects through different ways to gain different perspectives (Teaching and Learning Scotland, 2006).

The Foundation Phase

- ▶ In 2008, the Welsh Government released a Literacy and Numeracy framework. The Welsh Government have that these skills need to be embedded in the curriculum in a more meaningful way in context with their age and stage of development (Welsh Government, 2017). In contrast, Reggio Schools do treat children as individuals and not what is typical of their age.



(Reggioemila2015, no date)

Criticism

Whilst children have a lot of opinion in child-planning and participation, they need to be aware that communities have structures. Critics say that should children should not be led to believe that everything can be negotiated and that rules are an important part of structure in society. In agreement with this, another criticism is that it doesn't teach children foundational rules for when they attend their next school (Chertoff, 2013).



Conclusion

There are now many attempts to recreate the approach in countries all over the world such as New Zealand, America, Britain and Sweden.

The town in Italy where they first started the approach now have more than 78 centres.

In comparison

Whilst there are vast differences in approach in comparison to the Foundation Phase, there are similar elements but they are implemented in different ways. The main differences are their views on what is most important and their teaching deliverance.



Reference List

Chertoff, E. (2013) *The Atlantic: Reggio Emilia From Postwar Italy to NYC's Toniest Pre-schools*. Available at: <https://www.theatlantic.com/national/archive/2013/01/reggio-emilia-from-postwar-italy-to-nycs-toniest-preschools/267204/> (Accessed: 18 October 2020).

Children's Commissioner for Wales (date unknown) *UNCRC*. Available at: <https://www.childcomwales.org.uk/uncrc-childrens-rights/uncrc/> (Accessed: 17 October 2020).

Hewett, V. (2001) *Early Childhood Education Journal* (Vol. 29) : Examining the Reggio Emilia Approach to Early Childhood Education. Available at: <https://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=1&sid=be88e565-e9d9-46db-b743-c7c85b1b2224%40sessionmgr103> (Accessed: 17 October 2020).

Kinney, L. and Wharton, P. (2008) *An Encounter with Reggio Emilia*. Oxon: Routledge.

Learning and Teaching Scotland (2006) *The Reggio Emilio Approach to Early Education*. Available at: https://education.gov.scot/nih/Documents/ELC/ELC35_ReggioEmilia/ELC35_ReggioAug06.pdf (Accessed: 16 October 2020).

Marsh, C. (2009) (2009) *Key concepts for understanding curriculum*. 4th edn. London: Routledge.

Pound, L. (2006) *How Children Learn*. London: Practical Pre-school books.

Reggio Children (date unknown) *Charter of Rights*. Available at: <https://www.reggiochildren.it/assets/Uploads/RC-100LM-CartaDiritti-3.pdf> (Accessed: 17 October 2020).

Rinaldi, C. (1998) 'The Pedagogy of Listening', lecture given at International Winter Institute, Reggio Emilia, January.

Welsh Government (2015) *The Foundation Phase*. Available at: <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-02/foundation-phase-framework-revised-2015.pdf> (Accessed: 16 October 2020).

Welsh Government (2017) *Literacy and Numeracy: your questions answered*. Available at: <https://hwb.gov.wales/api/storage/a625428e-9359-4981-a5a0-5accbc506b9d/literacy-and-numeracy-your-questions-answered.pdf> (Accessed: 19 October).

Images

Reggioemila2015 (date unknown) *The 100 Languages*. Available at: <https://reggioemilia2015.weebly.com/the-100-languages.html> (Accessed 19 October 2020).