

Case Study – Every Child Matters Standards Award

Name of organisation: [The William Henry Smith School](#)

Type: [Residential Special School](#)

Local Authority: [Non-maintained](#)

Date ECM Standards Award achieved: [July 2009](#)

Relevant contextual information about the educational setting and ECM:

We are a residential special school catering for boys with statements of special educational need. All of our young people have complex needs, under the category of behavioural, emotional and social difficulties.

Our school ethos strongly links to the principles surrounding ECM. We started the standards award as a means of concreting evidence and validating our practice. We also wanted to use it as a means for further improving our service.

The reasons why the ECM Standards were chosen:

The school was keen to have a structure to identify where it was in terms of ECM. We needed a way of gathering evidence to show and prove that we were meeting the outcomes. We wanted something we could cross match to our SEF (OfSTED). We wanted quantitative data/evidence.

How the implementation of the ECM Standards was organised:

We were keen to make the collecting of evidence a whole school project. 12 members of staff across our school agreed to lead a standard, few were experienced in this sort of project, but being keen to give it a go, with support, got them off to a good start. We found that staff began to step out of their comfort zones (their own departments) and began asking questions.

One member of staff led the organisation of the award and facilitated ½ termly meetings (some whole group, others were much smaller); it gave people the chance to share ideas and check with the rest of the group if they were on the right track.

What worked well in engaging with the ECM Standards process:

Having a clear set of standards with very clear and precise descriptors certainly helped. The self-evaluation process was vital; we were able to see for ourselves where we were at and, where we needed to go. The flexibility of the award was positive too; we were encouraged to collect a range of evidence from a variety of sources. We were supported and encouraged by our assessor.

Examples of innovative ECM practice worth disseminating:

We were keen to replicate a style that our school ethos matched and therefore we spread the standards across 12 different members of staff, of varying experience and seniority, from all of our departments...we had 12 ECM leaders who, with support, conducted an audit and collected evidence to support their particular ECM standard. It was a great success and many staff reaped the rewards associated with personal gratification, as well as professional achievement.

Impact on children/young people:

Well the young people certainly knew we were undertaking the award...ask them now about ECM and they'll be able to recite the outcomes and explain what it means for them! We frequently hear our young people chanting, "don't forget Miss, every child matters"

Impact on staff and other stakeholders:

ECM is well embedded. Our stakeholders know we hold the award and most know the process we went through to get it. Our recent OfSTED Inspector said "Practice is extremely well coordinated and fully embraces the government's Every Child Matters framework", (OfSTED, 2010).

Ongoing ECM developments resulting from engaging with the ECM Standards:

We are still working on an aspect of our action plan, following our achievement of the ECM award. This is within Curriculum Entitlement, Access and Choice, where we feel that we need to extend our curriculum to include further accreditation at Level 1, thus providing Progression Pathways for individual students. We are also looking to develop 2 'Alite' modules.

We have had several schools visit us to look at how we implement the outcomes and recently we hosted an ENGAGE (previously NAES) day to share our experiences of the ECM standards.