The *Every Child Matters* (2003a) agenda has been a key driver to reforms within all services used by children and young people in England since the turn of the twenty-first century, including the educational system. The tragic death of Victoria Climbié, on 25 February 2000, provided the catalyst for the government’s proposals to reform the content and delivery of services for children, young people and their families. In response to the inquiry headed by Lord Laming into Victoria Climbié’s death, the prime minister stated:

at the hands of those entrusted with her care, she suffered appallingly and eventually died. Her case was a shocking example from a list of children terribly abused and mistreated. The names of the children involved, echoing down the years, are a standing shame to us all . . . we all desperately want to see people, practices and policies in place to make sure that the risk is as small as is humanly possible

(Department for Education and Skills (DfES), 2003b: 1–2)

The government’s vision behind the *Every Child Matters* agenda was systemic change to:

- integrate universal and targeted services for children from birth to 19
- build wrap around care and services for children, young people and their families
- promote prevention, early identification and intervention of children at risk and those in need of protection
- support parents and carers.

To realise this vision five priority outcomes were identified and provide a framework, which aims to ensure that every child and young person has the chance to:

- **Be healthy**
  - Physically healthy
  - Mentally and emotionally healthy
  - Sexually healthy
  - Healthy lifestyles
  - Choose not to take illegal drugs
  - Parents, carers and families promote healthy choices

- **Stay safe**
  - From maltreatment, neglect, violence and sexual exploitation
  - From accidental injury and death
– From bullying and discrimination
– From crime and anti-social behaviour in and out of school
– Have security, stability and are cared for
– Parents, carers and families provide safe homes and stability

■ Enjoy and achieve
– Ready for school
– Attend and enjoy school
– Achieve stretching national educational standards at primary school
– Achieve personal and social development and enjoy recreation

■ Achieve stretching national educational standards at secondary school
– Parents, carers and families support learning

■ Make a positive contribution
■ Engage in decision-making and support the community and environment
■ Engage in law-abiding and positive behaviour in and out of school
■ Develop positive relationships and choose not to bully and discriminate
– Develop self-confidence and successfully deal with significant life changes and challenges

■ Develop enterprising behaviour
■ Parents, carers and families promote positive behaviour
■ Achieve economic well-being
■ Engage in further education, employment or training on leaving school
■ Ready for employment
■ Live in decent homes and sustainable communities
■ Access to transport and material goods
■ Live in households free from low income
■ Parents, carers and families are supported to be economically active

(DfES, 2004a: 5)

The Children Act 2004 (http://www.dfes.gov.uk/everychildmatters) set the legislative spine to deliver the proposed outcomes and, under the auspices of a newly appointed Children’s Commissioner, required local authorities to:

■ work with local partners to agree local priorities for improving outcomes and commissioning services for children, young people and parents
■ appoint a Director/Lead Members of Children’s Services (by 2008 at the latest) to provide impetus and vision for local change
■ lead on integrated delivery through multi-agency Children’s Trusts which bring together all services for children and young people in an area
■ set up Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LCSBs) to replace the non-statutory Area Child Protection Committees (ACPCs) in order to provide a sharper focus on safeguarding children. Emphasis was placed on the agencies of health, schools, courts, police and social services to work together to combat child abuse in all its forms
■ set up databases and indexes of children to enable better sharing of information relevant to their welfare
■ develop a Children and Young People’s Plan

APPENDIX

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promote educational achievement of looked-after children
- make provision for foster care and private fostering
- establish Joint Inspection Frameworks/Joint Area Reviews to assess how effectively services worked together to improve the outcomes for children, young people and their families.

Since 2004, the outcomes framework has been driven by numerous interdependent strategies across the children and young people’s services. For example, a common assessment framework underpins two broad aspects of the Every Child Matters integrated workforce strategy through workplace reform and multi-agency working.

**Workforce reform**

This includes the introduction of the Common Core of Skills and Knowledge for the Children’s Workforce to ensure all professionals have the knowledge and skills to work effectively with children and their families, and access to training when relevant. The skills and knowledge are described under six main headings:

- effective communication and engagement with children, young people and families
- child and young person development
- safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child
- supporting transitions
- multi-agency working
- sharing information.

For further details visit the following websites: http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/delivering services/commoncore; http://www.ecm.gov.uk/workforcereform and http://www.remodelling.org.

The Common Core of Skills and Knowledge for the Children’s Workforce is embedded within the Revised Professional Standards for Teachers and those required for Qualified Teacher Status (TDA, 2007)

**Multi-agency working**

This involves bringing professionals from different agencies together to meet the needs of children and families and jointly agree the delivery of actions arising from a common or specialist assessment. Information on different service models and a toolkit for practitioners are presented as the multi-agency resource online at http://www.ecm.gov.uk/multiagencyworking.

**CONCLUSION**

The Every Child Matters agenda has made an enormous impact on the whole of the educational system in England. In relation to personalisation and choice in the secondary years of schooling for example, Charles Clarke (the then Secretary of State) states that the government’s goal is to ensure every young person achieves their full potential by offering:

- a smooth transition from primary to secondary school
- excellent teaching in every school based on real knowledge of individual pupils, helping all to achieve their potential
- more use of ICT to support good teaching and learning
teachers who are masters of their subject, and who can enthuse and inspire, with excellent
training for all
an interesting, broad and rich curriculum with more choice and a wider set of out-of-hours
opportunities – including sports, clubs and residential activities through schools
schools free of disruption, with better behaviour, and better management of excluded pupils
a step-change in school attendance, giving better chances to children but also reducing crime
and anti-social behaviour, and improving communities
secondary schools at the heart of communities, working well with parents, and forging good
partnerships to support vulnerable pupils.

(DfES, 2004b: 59)

It is important that you familiarise yourself with the Every Child Matters agenda and wider
implications of the numerous strategies rolled out by government, including An Action Plan for
the Ten Year Strategy: Sure Start Children’s Centres, Extended Schools and Childcare (DfES, 2006)
by visiting the website on a frequent basis, as many of these impact directly on your work with
children and young people.

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING
David Fulton.


Every Child Matters (2003a) Every Child Matters Green paper Presented to Parliament by the Chief
Secretary to the Treasury by Command of Her Majesty, September 2003 (Cm 5860), Norwich: HMSO.


Qualified Teacher Status. Available online at: http://www.tda.gov.uk/teachers/professional
standards.aspx.

RELEVANT WEBSITE
Teachers’tv: http://www.teachers_tv/everychildmatters.
Includes case studies about how to develop extended services in schools, research initiatives, news
and a schools forum.