

**Fostering self-esteem in the French primary classroom
through the use of personal social and citizenship
education.**

SUBMITTED BY

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Doctor of Philosophy

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to investigate the role of personal, social and citizenship education (PSCE) in fostering positive self-esteem in two instrumental case studies which took place in two classrooms of 7-10 year old children (N=40) in France during the 2007-2008 school year. The study used a mixture of quantitative and qualitative methodologies including a self-esteem survey administered to pupils in the two case-study classrooms as well as to students in two control classrooms (N=47) at the beginning and end of the school year. Throughout the course of the year a series of semi-structured interviews was also conducted with six focus children selected from each class (2 high, 2 medium and 2 low self-esteem children) as well as with the two class teachers and the parents/step-parents of the focus children. In addition, the study included non-participant observation which focussed on the participation and behaviour of the focus children during PSCE lessons and other lessons through the use of three separate observation schedules.

The study found evidence of the important influence of significant others, in particular, parents, peers and teachers, on the focus children's self-esteem. Although the quantitative analysis of the self-esteem questionnaires showed no statistically significant increase in self-esteem at the group level over time, the qualitative findings indicate that teachers' relationship with their students, their promotion of responsibility and self-efficacy, and their careful implementation of PSCE practices contributed to increases in individual children's self-esteem. There was also evidence that the implementation of PSCE activities contributed to improvements in children's peer relations.

TO MY CHILDREN

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CHAPTER 1 : INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study is to investigate the various influences of Personal, Social and Citizenship Education (PSCE) on children's self-esteem in the Primary School in France.

There has been much discussion around the importance of developing healthy self-esteem in children in the classroom. Research has shown that the social context of the classroom strongly influences children's self-concept and self-esteem. Some students who enter primary school optimistic, curious and open to learning develop negative beliefs about themselves and their ability to succeed and contribute to the world in a positive way. In contrast, research has shown that children who maintain optimistic views of themselves and their future are more open to change, persevere when faced with difficulties and are able to set and achieve goals. Interest in classroom practices and their effect on students' self-esteem has recently come to the forefront in France – the context for this study - as witnessed in publications addressing student humiliation, social comparison, and pupil diversity. Teachers are increasingly desirous of implementing classroom practices which value children and their diversity but are often at a loss as to how to do this.

While some researchers and educators continue to question the importance of fostering self-esteem in the classroom others argue that having a positive sense of self-worth is one of the basic foundations for learning. Moreover, many experts stress that positive self-esteem is vital to the adaptive functioning and everyday happiness of children not only when they are young but as they mature into adolescents, and later in their adult life as well. It has also been suggested that teachers' concern for and knowledge of individual contingencies of self-worth are highly important for developing an inclusive school culture. This is a crucial argument for considering the development of self-esteem in the classroom especially given the increasing diversity and heterogeneity of schools in recent times.

Fostering healthy self-esteem in children can also be seen as a way of empowering children and preparing them for the challenges which they will encounter throughout their lives. In this way, contributing to the positive development of self-esteem can be seen as one of the essential goals of education. Beane (1994) suggests that it is a matter of extending 'the possibility of human dignity' and emphasises that schools have an obligation to foster such dignity. He stresses that :

The real challenge in this area of schooling is to clear up the confusion and reduce the contradictions so that efforts to enhance self-perceptions can become authentic and meaningful. This means moving beyond the ‘fluff’ and the quick-fix program toward a genuine remaking of the schools so that they are self-enhancing places where human dignity and personal and social efficacy are central themes in every corner of the institution. (p. 85)

Much attention has been given recently to studies examining the effect of social context on learning. A number of these studies advocate a shift in teaching practices away from traditional models which value individual performance, competition and social comparison towards models thought to promote self-efficacy, empathy and cooperation within the classroom. This is in line with current theory on teaching practices thought to foster self-esteem in the classroom as well as the practices linked to personal, social and citizenship education (PSCE). The area of PSCE within the curriculum has been highlighted as a means to promote children’s self-esteem in that it aims to help children recognise their own value and the value of others in the classroom through the development of skills such as communication, co-operation, conflict resolution and problem solving and endeavours to foster a sense of responsibility in children as well.

Despite the interest shown by teachers in the concept of self-esteem and the wealth of material advocating teaching practices instrumental in raising self-esteem, little empirical research has been done in this area. Research conducted in most recent times has focussed on practices thought to raise self-esteem or self-concept among students with learning difficulties, especially in the area of literacy and dyslexia. There would seem to be a definite need and call for empirical research on self-esteem in the classroom with students who have not been diagnosed with learning disabilities. This is particularly the case in France where, despite a growing number of teachers seeking to integrate practices favourable to the enhancement of self-esteem into their classrooms, many others are continuing to promote a culture of humiliation as a means of maintaining order and as a way of getting the pupils to work harder.

The goal of this study was therefore to understand the ways in which PSCE might contribute to raising self-esteem in primary school children. The overarching question which served as the foundation of this research was:

How might teachers use practices linked to personal, social and citizenship education- which aim to encourage children to value their identity and respect themselves and others, to develop a capacity for empathy and listening, to work co-operatively and to be

responsible for themselves and for their community-to raise children's self-esteem in the French primary school?

In particular the study aimed to investigate the following questions:

- **How does self-esteem develop/evolve in the primary classroom?**
- **What are the factors which contribute to an increase or decrease in children's self-esteem in the classroom?**
- **What influence, if any, do certain PSCE practices have on children's self-esteem?**

CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION: PRIMARY EDUCATION IN FRANCE

Given that this research was based on two case studies situated within the French school system it is important to provide some background on primary education in France. The following section briefly describes the history of the French educational system, its present organisation and the pedagogical context within which it is situated.

Historical foundations

Compulsory education in France dates back to 1882 during the establishment of France's Third Republic (Chadwick, 1997; Osler & Starkey, 2001). The education minister at the time, Jules Ferry, initiated what was and remains to be referred to as *l'école de la République*. Through two laws passed on June 16th and on March 28th 1882, compulsory, secular and free primary education was established for all children from age six to age thirteen. (Chadwick, 1997). The main objective of schools during this time was to 'consolidate French identity' (Ruget, 2006, p.22). Costa –Lascoux (1998, in Osler & Starkey, 2001) points to the first statement of the curriculum of compulsory primary education published in article one of the Jules Ferry law of 28 March 1882 which put moral and civic instruction before reading, writing and literature in terms of national priorities. *L'école unique* was established in 1959 for all children and extended the age required to leave school to sixteen (Albertini, 1992). This means in principle that all children receive the same curriculum from age 6 to age 16.

Organisation of primary school

The French educational system provides free nursery education for children 3 to 5 years old. Primary school lasts for a period of five years. This period is divided into *cycles* or learning stages. The first stage, *cycle 1*, covers the first two years of nursery school, *cycle 2* extends

from the last year of nursery school to the second year of primary school (GSM- Grand Section Maternelle, CP-Cours Préparatoire, CE1-Cours Elémentaire). The third stage, *cycle 3*, covers the last three years of primary school (CE2- Cours Elémentaire 2, CM1- Cours Moyen 1, CM2- Cours Moyen 2) The idea behind this more recent approach is to allow children several years within one cycle to achieve proficiency in various domains expected at different stages of primary education. This was established in opposition to the yearly set requirements which existed prior to this reform and which had resulted in many children having to repeat a school year (Anderson-Levitt et al., 1991).

The structure of France's educational system is highly centralised. It is directed and overseen by the Ministry of Education in Paris which is responsible for designing and supervising official curriculum programmes (*les Instructions Officielles*), selecting teachers through a process of competitive examinations, appointing them to schools and paying their salaries (Anderson-Levitt et al., 1991). Once qualified, teachers become civil servants and owe obedience to the French Republic (Article 28 of law number 83-634 of 13 July 1983). The concept of 'laïcité', dating to the Jules Ferry period, permeates French pedagogy. It emphasises schools as being a separate place in society, free from religious and political influences, in which all children are to be treated as equal. In theory, anything which relates to the child outside of the school walls (family context, political and religious beliefs, socio-economic status, country, culture and language of origin) is *ignored* with the goal of freeing children from their past in order to provide all of them with equal opportunities for success (Helot and Young, 2005; Starkey, 2000; Young, 2008). Starkey underlines the role of *laïcité* in French state education stating:

The basis of state education in France is therefore initiation into a common culture through a single curriculum. It does not recognize difference, but rather starts from the premise that, within the Republic, all citizens are equal. Inequalities are deemed to stem from family background and therefore are irrelevant to the school, which is part of the public sphere. (p. 43)

Pedagogy

Although educational reforms which have been passed since the 1980s have placed more emphasis on implementing more child-centred approaches (Bulletin Officiel de l'Education National, 1988, 1989), the education system in France continues to rely on traditional methods and authoritarianism (Planel, 1997). Recent studies have highlighted some teachers' continued use of punishment, social comparison and public ridicule as a means of managing

the class (Merle, 2002; Osborn & Broadfoot, 1992; Osborn, 2003; Planel, 1997). This has been linked to the historical tradition of discipline being used as a tool for the development of intellectual and moral qualities (Meuret, 2007).

Order and rationalism also play a strong role in the French classroom (Planel, 1997) with learning often being teacher led and with teacher control being very high (Osborn & Broadfoot, 1992; Planel, 1997). In their comparative study on primary classrooms in France and in England, Osborn and Broadfoot (1992) cite examples of classrooms in which cooperation and mutual help were discouraged. The majority of teachers, educators and parents in France expect classrooms to be silent which means that many teachers prefer that children work individually instead of collaboratively out of fear they will lose control of the class or that the working environment might become chaotic or loud (Osborn & Broadfoot, 1992) In his recent study on humiliation in the schools Merle (2005) advocates that the basic right of pupils, to be heard and to 'have a voice' is lacking in the French system. Despite such accounts, the most recent programmes, in the area of PSCE in France (Bulletin Officiel de l'Education Nationale, 2008), which are discussed in detail in Chapter 2, currently provide a basis for valuing children and ensuring their rights are recognised.

PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL CONTEXT

Although I have been interested in the development of self-esteem and its influence within diverse educational contexts for quite some time, there were two sets of circumstances which sparked a strong desire to pursue research in this area and which directed me to my specific area of study. The first experience was that of watching the transformation of my eldest son as he began his education in the local primary school in France. Initially full of curiosity and a desire for learning, he slowly came to view himself as unintelligent and incompetent in most school disciplines and began to display behaviour linked to what could be termed 'learned helplessness' (Covington, 1992; Seligman, 1995) at the age of 7. This was disturbing given my commitment to fostering healthy academic self-concepts in my children and my own prior experiences as a child in primary school which, for a number of years, had led me to believe I was incapable of academic success. Having witnessed the powerful influence that teachers and peers within an educational context can have on some children led me to explore the literature on this issue and to investigate various teaching practices that were being implemented in primary schools in the area at that time. I became interested in the role that

PSCE activities and fostering responsibility in children might play in the development of their self-esteem

At the same time I was working as a teacher trainer at the University Institute for Teacher Education (IUFM d'Alsace) in Strasbourg, France. Many of the student teachers with whom I came into contact were searching for answers to similar questions, most of which revolved around classroom discipline problems, conflict between pupils, student disaffection and growing student diversity. These concerns were echoed by experienced teachers and by articles published in the press, addressing the role of self-esteem in the classroom (Gorce, 2004; Jacqu , 2004; Legrand, 2004; Vincent, 2004). This led to the desire to investigate the possible positive influences of PSCE practices on children's self-esteem in the French classroom.

Influence of National Cultural Context

My conception of education has undoubtedly been coloured by my own culture and experience growing up and being educated in America. My attachment to the belief that students should be involved in their own learning and that all children are capable of learning and of making progress if given the right learning environment is something which has unconsciously been passed down to me through the culture in which I was educated. The idea that teachers should be concerned about the self-esteem of their students has inevitably also been passed down through the strong influence of the self-esteem movement which reached its peak in the United States at the time I was completing my teacher education. The French scholar Denis Meuret (2007) highlights the permeating nature of such beliefs emphasising that the vision of the purpose of school and its place in society is an integral part of the culture of educators in a country. In comparing the influence of John Dewey (and the philosophies inherent in the current of pragmatism) on the educational system in America with the influence of Emile Durkheim on the French educational system Meuret emphasises the extent to which culture has influenced educational policy and classroom practices in both countries.

Whereas the United States historically has promoted the traditions of 'individualism' France situates itself with a 'collectivist' tradition (Alexander, 2002). The promotion of democracy and the development of the child formed the pedagogical basis on which the American school system was established whereas the French model was based on the transmission of knowledge and the integration of the national culture (based on the republican values).

Moreover, the French system traditionally has emphasised the importance of a morality based on reason and transmitted through discipline, whilst the philosophical undercurrents of the American system have stressed the idea of moral development as a result of human interaction in a democratic society which teaches children the values and habits of service to others (Meuret, 2007). The influence of culture on the goals and representations of teachers and educators in France raise important questions and need to be taken into consideration especially with regards to implications for policy and practice.

METHODOLOGY

This research was conducted in four primary school classes in France- two in-depth case studies and two control classes in which questionnaire surveys were administered at the beginning and end of the school year- from September 2007 to July 2008. Six children were selected from each of the two case study classes to form a focus group comprising two low, two medium and two high self-esteem children. A mixture of quantitative and qualitative data collection tools were employed including questionnaires, interviews and observations. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the focus children and class teachers in each term. Semi-structured interviews were also conducted with the parents/step-parents of the twelve focus children from the two case study schools in the first trimester in order to obtain a deeper understanding of the influence various contexts had on the children's levels of self-esteem.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

This chapter has described the focus and context of the research and outlined the methodology. The following chapter, Chapter 2, discusses in detail the literature around self-esteem including theories on the origins and development of self-esteem throughout childhood and within the classroom and presents the official curriculum and provision for training in the area of PSCE within the French primary education sector. Chapter 3 details the methodology of the research: the philosophical standpoint of the researcher, the research undertaken, the aims and design of the research and the methods of analysis. In Chapter 4 the data obtained through the semi-structured interviews conducted with the parents/step-parents of the twelve focus children are discussed. The focus shifts, in Chapter 5 to the two class teachers' perceptions of and experience with various types of Personal, Social and Citizenship Education (PSCE) activities throughout the course of the school year. Chapter 6 presents the

data obtained with regards to the pupils. Moving from a macro to micro level it discusses the data obtained from the pre and post self-esteem questionnaires administered in the two case-study classes and the two control classes. It then investigates the perceptions of the focus children with regards to the PSCE activities implemented throughout the year. The final section examines the in-depth case studies of six of the twelve focus children. In Chapter 7 the key findings of the research are synthesised, and the implications for theory, policy and practice are discussed. Consideration is also given to potential areas for further research in this field.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter begins by reviewing the literature around self-esteem: the development of the concept throughout the past decade, theories on the origins and development of self-esteem and variables thought to influence the development of children's self-esteem. It then examines the literature on self-esteem in the context of the classroom highlighting various theories on the development of children's self-esteem within the classroom and reviews the literature on self-esteem intervention programmes in the classroom. Finally the chapter describes the official curriculum for Personal Social and Citizenship Education within the French primary education sector, discusses the current provision for teacher training and materials in this area and lays a foundation for the undertaking of the present study.

WHAT IS SELF-ESTEEM?

The issue of terminology

One of the problems in researching self-esteem is the difficulty of defining the concept. Within each definition terminologies are not always employed in the same manner nor do they have the same meanings. At times concepts such as self-esteem, self-concept and self-image are used interchangeably (Burns, 1982). Other times the use of such terminology is contradictory (Lawrence, 2005; Burnett, 1996). Experts also point to the difficulty in defining self-esteem due to its multi-dimensional nature (Burden, 2005; Harter, 1999; Humphrey, 2004).

Throughout the literature on the self a number of terminologies may appear including: self-esteem, self-concept, self-image, self-worth, self-representations, self-perceptions, self-evaluations, self-affects and self-efficacy. Many researchers point to the confusion and contradiction in terminology as the principal reason research in the area of self-esteem is often discounted as lacking in validity (Baumeister, 2003; Harter, 1999; Kohn, 1994; Mruk, 1999). A closer look at the use of terminology and the meanings conferred to certain concepts is a necessary step in defining self-esteem.

Often the definitions are so strongly linked to each other that they actually seem to run together. It appears that most definitions of the self are based on the notion of a sort of 'self-awareness', most often referred to as the 'self-concept'. The self-concept has been defined in

some of the following ways: 'all the possible ways an individual conceives of himself' (Burns, 1982, p. 25), 'an individual's perceived competencies' (Humphrey, 2004, p. 348), 'the sum total of an individual's mental and physical characteristics and his/her evaluation of them.' (Lawrence, 1996, p. 1). This idea that the self-concept is a picture or an image an individual has of himself is perhaps one of the reasons the term self-concept is often used interchangeably with the term self-image. Despite the parallel use of the terms, self-concept is the term most frequently used in research and in definitions of the self.

Whereas self-concept refers to an image or perception of the self and its attributes, self-esteem has most often been referred to as the evaluative aspect of the self (Baumeister, 2003; Harter, 1999; Humphrey, 2004; James, 1902; Mruk, 1999; Pope, McHale & Craighead, 1988). Although Harter (1999) emphasises the fact that self-representations are not valence free (human beings are constantly evaluating their attributes whether consciously or not) and therefore involve some degree of evaluation, self-esteem can be seen as an evaluation of one's current self-representations as compared with the image of an 'ideal self' (Harter, 1999; Humphrey, 2004; James 1902; Mruk, 1999). The discrepancy between the two selves influences an individual's self-esteem. In other words, the greater the discrepancy, the lower the individual's self-esteem, the smaller the discrepancy, the higher his/her self-esteem.

One difficulty with regard to defining these constructs is that different researchers interpret the terminology in various ways. Burnett (1996) sees self-esteem and self-concept as part of the same construct. The difference, he stresses, is whether one is referring to domain specific aspects of the self, in which case he uses the term self-concept, or whether one is referring to a more global or general evaluation of the self, where he uses the term self-esteem. This idea is supported by various researchers in the field (Burden 2005; Burns, 1982; Harter, 1999). For Lawrence (1996) self-concept is an 'umbrella term' which is made up of self-image, ideal self and self-esteem (p. 2). Burns (1982) also situates self-esteem under the overarching concept of self-concept and yet at the same time he explains that the terms self-concept, self-attitudes, and self-esteem can all be used synonymously.

Defining self-esteem

It is important to situate the current definitions of self-esteem within an historical context and to trace the evolution of theories on self-esteem to the present time. Although theories on the nature of the self have preoccupied philosophers since the ancient Greeks, most work on self-esteem finds its roots in definitions first emitted by William James (1890) and the symbolic interactionists Cooley (1902) and Mead (1934).

A multi-dimensional and hierarchical view of self-esteem

James (1890) was the first to introduce the nature of the self as multi-dimensional and hierarchical. He posited that an individual can possess a multitude of different 'selves' or different voices. These differences could be harmonious or conflictual depending on one's 'pretensions'. It is on the basis of these pretensions that James formulated his theory of self-esteem which he defined as a ratio in the following manner:

...our self-feeling in this world depends entirely on what we back ourselves to be and do. It is determined by the ratio of our actualities to our supposed potentialities; a fraction of which our pretensions are the denominator and the numerator our success: thus,

$$\text{Self-esteem} = \frac{\text{Success}}{\text{Pretensions}}$$

Such a fraction may be increased as well by diminishing the denominator as by increasing the numerator. (p. 310- 311)

According to this theory, an individual can lack successes in many areas of life but unless he aspires to success in these areas or places a certain amount of importance on gaining success in these particular domains, his lack of successes will not affect his self-esteem.

Contributions from the Symbolic Interactionists

The symbolic interactionists Cooley (1902) and Mead (1934) emphasised the role that social influences play in the development of the self. They agreed on three basic foundations in the construction of the self: 1) a child goes through a process of 'imitation' of the behaviour of the socialising agents in his environment, 2) his behaviour is adapted to seek approval from

significant others, 3) the individual adopts the attitudes toward himself as reflected by those significant others as his own through a process of internalisation (Harter, 1999).

In the eyes of Cooley, the self or the 'I' could not exist without first existing in the minds of others. In fact, Cooley felt that individuals are constantly thinking about themselves and how they appear to others through the process of imagination. He also placed great emphasis on what he called 'self-feeling', a feeling with regards to the self with which one is born and which develops throughout the individual's experiences and social interactions. He stressed that individuals all possess a 'self idea' otherwise known as the 'looking-glass self' which he expressed in the following couplet:

Each to each a looking-glass
Reflects the other that doth pass. (p. 184)

According to Cooley, this 'self-idea' is made up of three parts: the imagination of our appearance to the other person, the imagination of that other person's judgement of that appearance, and some sort of 'self-feeling' which accompanies that judgement. The self-feeling is dependent on the amount of importance the other person holds for the individual; an individual's imagined judgement of his appearance could either produce pride or shame depending on 'the character and weight' conferred on the other person.

Individuals of such importance, referred to as 'significant others', play an essential role in the development of the self concept in that, through a process of internalisation, a child comes to accept these reflected images, judgements, and perceptions as his own.

Mead also stressed the importance of the social world of the child in the development of the self concept. For Mead a child is constantly acting out scenes from his environment in which he assumes various roles. Through this process of acting out the child takes on the role of the 'generalised other' all the while internalising the rules and expectations of society as well as the judgements of significant others. The role of the generalised other and its perceived judgement of the individual contribute to an overall sense of self-worth (Mead, 1934; Harter, 1999).

Social-cognitive perspectives

Preoccupation with self-esteem and ways of defining it were put aside during most of the first half of the 20th century with the emphasis at the time being on behaviourism and the observable qualities of human beings (Harter, 1999; Mruk, 1999). The interest in self-esteem was reignited as psychology moved towards a more social-cognitive perspective of the construction of the self. With this interest came the desire to measure self-esteem resulting in the construction of the first self-esteem measurement instruments presented by Rosenberg and Coopersmith. Most studies conducted today have some theoretical foundations stemming from the research done at this time by Rosenberg and Coopersmith (Mruk, 1999).

Rosenberg (1965) defined self-esteem as ‘a positive or negative attitude toward a particular object, namely the self’ (p.30). He was the first to point to attitude formation as a basis for self-esteem and the first to produce and put into practice a self-esteem scale. This self-esteem scale is based on reflected self appraisals and social comparison. Although this scale has been criticised for measuring ‘global self-esteem’, some researchers point to it as being the most widely used instrument today (Flynn, 2003).

Coopersmith (1967) placed emphasis on empirical methods of observing and measuring self-esteem and defined self-esteem in the following manner:

By self-esteem we refer to the evaluation which the individual makes and customarily maintains with regard to himself: it expresses an attitude of approval or disapproval, and indicates the extent to which the individual believes himself to be capable, significant, successful and worthy. In short, self-esteem is a personal judgement of worthiness that is expressed in attitudes the individual holds toward himself. It is a subjective experience which the individual conveys to others by verbal reports and other overt expressive behaviour. (pp.4-5)

Social-cognitive perspectives: The phenomenological approach

The goal of the phenomenological approach in psychology, sometimes referred to as the ‘humanistic’ approach (Burns, 1982) is to see things from the individual’s perspective, to understand how the individual’s environment, beliefs and values influence their behaviour (Burns, 1982). Most of what we see as the self-concept today stems from Roger’s work with his patients in therapy. For Rogers (1951) the self-concept is:

...an organized configuration of perceptions of the self.... It is composed of such elements as the perceptions of one's characteristics and abilities; the percepts and concepts of the self in relation to others and the environment; the value qualities which are perceived as associated with experiences and objects; and goals and ideals which are perceived as having positive or negative valence. (p.136)

Within the context of therapy, the three main conditions for personality change in another advocated by Rogers were 1) the practice of empathy, 2) the need for the therapist to maintain 'unconditional positive regard' with his client and 3) the need to demonstrate genuineness in the relationship (Rogers, 1991). Rogers asserted that these conditions also apply to primary care givers and to teachers (1991).

Cognitive theory

The emphasis in the past 30 years has been on the cognitive construction of the self. This perspective accents human beings as meaning makers stressing that individuals are constructing meaning systems based on beliefs, values and goals throughout their entire lives in order to make sense of their world (Dweck, 1999). Belief systems affect behaviour in various ways depending on an individual's past experiences and expectations faced with a particular event. Behaviour is a result of the way an individual perceives a situation and his/her inherent beliefs about him/herself at that time.

Social-cognitive theory

The work of Albert Bandura began the premises of what is now called social cognitive theory. This branch of psychology distanced Bandura from the previous social learning theories and emphasised the critical role that cognition plays in 'people's capability to construct reality, self-regulate, encode information, and perform behaviours' (Pajares, 2002, p. 1). Within this framework, individuals are seen as possessing a sense of agency, through which they are able to be involved in their own development and able to influence events through their own actions (Pajares, 2002). Underlying this sense of agency are individuals' self-beliefs which condition the amount of control individuals may have over their thoughts and actions. Pajares (2002) emphasises the role that environmental factors and social systems play within social cognitive theory stating that within this framework:

Factors such as economic conditions, socioeconomic status, and educational and familial structures do not affect human behaviour directly. Instead they affect it to the degree that they influence people's aspirations, self-efficacy beliefs, personal standards, emotional states, and other self-regulatory influences. (p. 2)

Albert Bandura (1997) was the first to identify the concept of 'self-efficacy', an important aspect of an individual's belief system. The concept of self-efficacy revolves around individuals' beliefs about themselves regarding their capabilities of influencing the outcome of an event. Bandura (1997) refers to self-efficacy the following way: 'Perceived self-efficacy refers to beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments' (p.3).

Bandura proposed that individuals acquire self-efficacy beliefs in four different ways: through 1) enactive mastery experiences 2) vicarious experiences 3) verbal persuasion by trusted individuals and 4) previous experience of physiological states. Possessing self-efficacy beliefs about oneself influences self-esteem in that it lays a foundation for the building of a positive self-image and enables individuals to tackle challenges and take risks which eventually lead to further mastery or success experiences. These successful experiences contribute to a positive self-concept.

Carol Dweck also situates herself within a social-cognitive framework where the aim, she states, is to look at 'how people's beliefs and goals set up a meaning system within which they define themselves and operate' (Dweck, 2000, p.139). The feelings individuals have originate in their thoughts which are given meaning as they are filtered through their belief systems. Her work on self-theories, based on numerous studies conducted with children of all age groups, adolescents and college students points to links between people's self belief system, their goals and consequently their behaviour. Dweck asserts that some children when faced with a challenge or possible failure are able to talk themselves through it and even enjoy tackling the difficult task while others give up without trying and eventually adopt a helpless stance. Through careful tracking of children's statements, Dweck was able to link these responses to the individual's belief system and more specifically to whether the individual has an 'entity theory' or an 'incremental theory' of himself and his traits. Dweck uses the terms 'entity theory' and 'incremental theory' to define two opposing beliefs individuals hold concerning themselves and their traits. An entity theorist is someone who believes that personality traits are innate, fixed, and permanent. The term incremental theorist is used to define an individual who holds the belief that traits are open, dynamic and malleable. These self-theories can apply to traits such as intelligence, social skills or relational qualities, vary according to the situation and are open to change over time.

Attribution theory

Martin Seligman (1995) was the first to use the term 'explanatory style'. A fervent critique of the self-esteem movement, Seligman points to individuals' explanatory styles as the root of pessimism and optimism and suggests that modifying a person's "explanatory style" will give him the experiences with mastery necessary to developing an optimistic approach to life. Seligman clearly links the trait of optimism with high self-esteem and pessimism with what might be seen as the opposite of high self-esteem, that is to say, depression.

Explanatory style is a personality trait which Seligman defines as an individual's 'habits of thinking about causes' (p.52). These explanations about the causes and consequences of events fall into three categories: permanence, pervasiveness, and personalization and represent the way in which an individual views the cause and gives meaning to it.

How does this historical overview help us define self-esteem?

In examining some of the most important definitions and theories revolving around self-esteem we are able to identify three aspects of self-esteem, the cognitive, affective and evaluative elements. Smelser (1989) referred to these as the 'almost universally accepted components of the concept' (p.9) which he explains in the following way:

There is first, a cognitive element; self-esteem means characterizing some parts of the self in descriptive terms: power, confidence, and agency. It means asking what kind of person one is. Second, there is an affective element, a valence or degree of positiveness or negativeness attached to those facets identified; we call this high or low self-esteem. Third, and related to the second, there is an evaluative element, an attribution of some level of worthiness according to some ideally held standard. (p.10)

It is essential to note how the literature also points to the role these components of self-esteem play in an individual's behaviour. Many specialists support the idea of self-esteem acting as a filter through which an individual interprets events. (Burns, 1982; Dweck, 2000; Harter, 1999). This idea, which revolves around the concept of stability, suggests that an individual will avoid situations or behave uniquely in ways which are in accordance with his/her self-esteem (Burden, 2005; Burns, 1982; Harter, 1999). If a person has a negative view of him/herself with regards to academic performance or intelligence, he/she will behave in ways that maintain that image, such as failing on a test. Likewise, an individual who possesses high self-esteem will reject any input or feedback which is not in accordance with the positive images he/she has of him/herself.

Drawing on the above I adopted the following working definition:

Self-esteem consists in the attitudes an individual holds towards him/herself based on the discrepancy between his/her ideal self and his/her perceived actual self which results in the manifestation of positive or negative self-feelings and which conditions the individual's subsequent thoughts and behaviour.

THE ROLE OF SELF-ESTEEM IN THE CLASSROOM

The classroom is a social world where children spend a major part of their day. It is in the context of the classroom that pupils form an essential part of their self-perceptions including academic self-perceptions, self-efficacy, physical attractiveness, behaviour and popularity (Elbaum & Vaughn, 2001; Humphrey, 2003). These self-perceptions in turn contribute to the formation of children's self-esteem.

Importance of self-esteem in the classroom

There are various reasons educators should be concerned with the construct of self-esteem. To begin with, self-esteem is intricately linked with individuals' behaviour. As mentioned previously, self-esteem acts as a filter for individuals, conditioning their interpretation of learning tasks (Burns, 1982). Recent studies have investigated the effects of self-perceptions on the way students approach learning tasks (Dweck, 2000; Guimond, 2004; Monteil & Hugué, 2002). Some students who approach learning tasks or problems with a negative perception of their ability in certain subject areas put in less effort and abandon tasks sooner than others who hold positive beliefs about their ability in the area regardless of their actual ability. This reaction is referred to as 'learned helplessness'. Students demonstrate learned helplessness when, having encountered repeated failures in certain areas, they attribute the outcome of an event to circumstances beyond their control and therefore, convinced of encountering failure once more, prefer not to make any efforts towards achieving success (Covington, 1992; Seligman, 1995).

Self-esteem also affects children's motivation towards learning experiences. Motivation is linked to a person's sense of agency, 'how competent' a person thinks he is, the amount of confidence he has in accomplishing a task, how much control he thinks he has over the outcome along with the strategies he is able to employ in order to carry out that task (Burden, 2005). These beliefs can be seen as a person's sense of self-efficacy- the self-system

individuals possess that 'enable them to exercise a measure of control over their thoughts feelings, motivations and actions' (Burden, 2005, p. 20). An individual's beliefs contribute more to their behaviour and performance than their abilities. In other words, 'the beliefs that students develop about their capabilities help to determine what they do with the knowledge they have acquired'. (Burden, 2005, p.21)

Whereas some have argued that low self-esteem can not be held responsible for the wealth of social problems of which it has been accused (such as drug abuse, violence, delinquency and educational underachievement) (Emler, 2001), positive self-esteem has been shown to be critical to personal and social adjustment (Coopersmith, 1967; Humphrey, 2003) and to be linked to positive pro-social behaviour (Humphrey, 2003). It has also been suggested that healthy self-esteem contributes to adaptive functioning and everyday happiness of the individual (Harter, 1990).

Critics of self-esteem intervention programmes have pointed to a lack of causal evidence linking high self-esteem with academic achievement (Emler, 2001; Kohn, 1994). These critics emphasise a causal relationship in the other direction with academic achievement and ability being the strongest predictors of self-esteem. However, others argue that emphasis should not be placed on the direct causal link between self-esteem and academic achievement but rather educators should consider self-esteem as a mediator between the ability and achievement (Humphrey, 2005).

This overview on the evolution of the concept of self-esteem has highlighted the complex nature of the construct and discussed the various theories concerning its development. The various definitions signpost the nature of self-esteem and help us to identify ways in which children's self-esteem can be influenced positively or negatively. These definitions also provide a picture of the multi-dimensional nature of self-esteem, the role an individual's thoughts, perceptions and belief systems play in their interpretation of events and the role that social influences play in the formation of self-esteem. The need to be concerned with the development of children's self-esteem in the classroom has been highlighted based on theories underlining the influence of self-esteem on children's learning, motivation and behaviour.

Building on the evidence supporting the importance of self-esteem in the classroom there is now a need for more empirical research which specifically investigates the influence of

classroom practice on children's self-esteem. This study aims to explore the influences certain pedagogical practices might have on children's self-esteem in order to contribute to the debate around effective practices which may enhance children's self-esteem in the classroom.

THE ROLE OF SIGNIFICANT OTHERS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF SELF-ESTEEM

The role of parents or carers

Much of the literature in the field of self-esteem emphasises the critical role parents or carers play in the development of a child's self-esteem (Branden, 1995; Burns, 1982; Coopersmith, 1967; Emler, 2001; Harter, 1999; Kernis, Brown & Brody, 2000; Lawrence, 2006; Mruk, 1999). Harter (1999) refers firstly to 'parental responsiveness' as the foundation for secure self-esteem. Based on the work of psychodynamic and attachment theorists, it is thought that mothers who respond promptly and positively to their infant's demands and mastery attempts provide the child with the basis for positive feelings of him/herself as lovable and competent. Throughout childhood parental behaviour is seen to continue to play an important role. Nearly all of the writers in the field point to Coopersmith's (1967) study on the impact of the socialization practices of parents on their children's self-esteem. Coopersmith described four essential qualities of parents of high self-esteem children. These parents 1) were accepting, affectionate, and involved; 2) set and enforced rules consistently and communicated expectations of high standards of behaviour for the child; 3) preferred the use of explanation and discussion to the use of force or coercion as a means of discipline and control; and 4) respected their child and considered his/her opinion with regard to family decisions. More recent research has emphasised the role of parental approval and acceptance in the fostering of high self-esteem (Emler, 2001; Harter, 1999).

One study by Kernis (2000) confirms the importance of parental behaviour and focuses in particular on parental communication between child and parent. Kernis found that children who had low or unstable self-esteem (self-esteem which is fragile and fluctuates greatly depending on the context in which the individual finds him/herself) also reported having fathers who: engaged frequently in derogatory name calling and criticism, used guilt arousing techniques or 'love-withdrawal' as a means of responding to unwanted behaviour, did not show value affirming approval such as physical affection or spending time together and demonstrated poor problem solving skills when confronted with situations of family conflict.

Research on peer relations and social competence suggests that parental involvement and intervention with children strongly influence the amount of social skills a child may acquire. In discussing the origins of social competence Ladd (2005) refers to the influence parents have on children's social development in four ways: 'parent as designer, parent as mediator, parent as supervisor, and parent as advisor or consultant' (p. 224). The role of designer refers to the way in which parents' choices (or lack of choices) concerning the area in which they live but also to the amount of self-care (time before and after school without adult supervision) they expected of the child. Researchers found that large amounts of self-care in grades 1-3 was associated with lower peer competence in grade 6 (Pettit et al., 1997 as cited in Ladd, 2005), and was also linked to increases in anti-social behaviour (Posner and Vandell, 1994). Parents also were found to contribute to their child's social competence by involving them in extracurricular peer activities. This was seen to improve children's peer relations and social competence (Eccles and Barber, 1999; Ladd and Price, 1987) as these types of activities were seen to 'increase their commitment to societal rules and social conventions' (Ladd, 2005, p.225).

Parents are also referred to as mediators because they form a link between the home context and the peer environment. Parental involvement as mediators in other areas of children's lives was seen to have an influence on their social competence. These areas included: helping children to meet peers, arranging play dates, and building social networks, all of which are 'motivated by parents' child-rearing goals and their perceptions of children's social needs and development' (Ladd, 2005, p.226). Ladd suggests that parents act as mediators in the development of children's social competence stating that:

From these findings, the investigators inferred that some parents do more than simply arrange play activities; they also teach social roles and responsibilities and help children learn skills that are needed to manage their peer activities. For example, one pair of investigators noted, 'Our anecdotal data suggests that when parents initiate informal play activities in their homes, they often place children in the role of 'host'. In this role, children are expected to be concerned about the needs and wishes of their playmates and ensure that their guests 'have a good time'. (pp.226-227)

It was also observed that parents who supervised their children's peer-play sessions (parent as supervisor) and intervened when needed led to facilitating children's conflict resolution skills (Perlman and Ross, 1997). In referring to research conducted in this area Ladd concluded that: 'mothers of children with low peer acceptance tended to avoid the supervisory

role and, when compared to mothers of high status children, were less likely to implement interventions that might improve the quality of children's play.' (2005, p. 228).

Some research suggests that as consultants parents might initiate discussions on themes such as how to initiate friendships, maintain relationships, resolve conflicts and manage bullies (Ladd, 2005; Laird et al., 1994).

There is also some evidence that mothers' advice giving is possibly related to developing third-through sixth-graders' social competence, especially when the parent was sensitive and supportive (Cohen, 1989 as cited in Ladd, 2005). Ladd emphasises that in this study the mothers of children who were known to be rejected and neglected by peers 'seldom recommended effective group-oriented entry strategies' and likewise that mothers of neglected children 'were prone to suggest passive entry strategies' (Ladd, 2005, p. 229 referring to Russell and Finnie, 1990). There would also appear to be a link between 'social coaching' by parents and the development of social competence. Studies conducted by Mize and Pettit (1997) demonstrated that those children who had received high-quality social coaching from parents were found to have better social skills and were more accepted within their peer groups.

Despite the wide acceptance that parental behaviour is the first and perhaps most influential factor involved in the development of a child's self-esteem, some authors caution readers against a belief in the existence of a direct causal relationship between parental behaviour and children's self-esteem (Branden, 1995; Harris, 2009; Mruk, 2001). Both Mruk and Branden point to research on the concept of resilience which highlights the many exceptions that exist between parental behaviour and children's self-esteem. Some children who were raised by caring parents according to the above standards defined by Coopersmith have been found to have low self-esteem while others who have endured years of abuse, have displayed high self-esteem. Mruk (2001) argues that factors such as parental behaviour should be understood as being 'predisposing and interactive rather than causal or deterministic' and adds that conditions such as parental behaviour 'are among those conditions that increase (or by their absence, decrease) the likelihood of self-esteem', but that 'no one factor is enough to create high or low self-esteem' (p. 72). Harris (2009) also asserts that 'the parent-child relationship is a two-way process' and that parents possibly adjust their parenting style according to their child's personality (p.295) which could account for differences in self-esteem.

Due to the important influence this research has attributed to parents' role in the formation of their children's self-esteem and to its contested nature, data on parents was considered an essential part of this study.

The role of peers

As children reach middle-childhood the approval of peers becomes increasingly important, if not, at times, more important than parental approval (Burns, 1982; Harter, 1999). Burns points out that in upper primary school 'the child has an increased sensitivity to the approval and disapproval of significant others, especially peers and teachers' (p.177). Peers also provide feedback on cultural values and communicate what is acceptable behaviour and whether a child 'fits in' or not (Humphrey, 2004, p. 350). Harter reports that the influence of approval from peers increases as children reach adolescence and that support from peers (as well as from parents) strongly predicts children's level of self-worth. In studies conducted by Harter, pupils reporting strong support from peers were also identified as having high levels of self worth (1999). Surprisingly, it was also discovered that, 'support from peers in the public domain (e.g., classmates, peers in organization, work settings, etc...) [was] far more predictive of self-worth than [was] support from close friends' (p.177).

Research has also shown that children who are consistently rejected or who are not accepted by the group tend to revert to maladaptive social behaviour which in turn reinforces their exclusion from the group. In this sense, a child who is incapable of positively interacting within a social group may be trapped within a role in which they have difficulties escaping. As Asher (1983) explains, 'children who are trapped as marginal group members probably will behave in ways that do not reflect their true competence' (p. 1427). In their study conducted on the effects of peer rejection, Nesdale and Lambert (2007) highlight that whereas a single experience of rejection does not influence a child's self-esteem dramatically, repeated experiences of rejection have been shown to do so especially when the rejection comes from highly desirable individuals or groups.

One study has linked family support with friendship support and quality, indicating that early family support allows the child to develop positive relationships early on which then reinforces the child's sense of self-esteem (Franco & Levitt; 1998). This leads to the conclusion that children who lack early family support do not learn the skills necessary to the development of positive peer relationships which could lead to or reinforce low self-esteem.

However, despite these findings, there has been some evidence for the success of social skills training programmes in promoting behaviours which lead to greater acceptance by peers. Reports of success obtained from several social skills training studies (Asher 1983) confirm the idea that children can overcome obstacles such as lack of family support and that they are able to learn behaviours which allow them to be more accepted by their peers.

The teacher's role in the development of self-esteem

As discussed above, the primary source of children's self-esteem is their parents or primary care-givers. However many scholars emphasise the increasingly important influence other 'significant others' have on children's self-esteem as they mature (Burns, 1982; Harter, 1999; Humphrey, 2003; Lawrence; 2006, Mruk, 1999). Teachers play an important role in the development of academic self-esteem due to their position as 'experts' and authority figures and, in addition to feedback from peers, they constitute one of the most important sources of feedback with regards to academic competence (Humphrey, 2003; Humphrey, 2004). Burns supports this idea stating that 'the teacher's power to humiliate or honour, to hurt or to heal is beyond doubt' (1982, p.251) and gives evidence of the teacher having a powerful impact on the self-concept of the children in their classroom (1982).

Teacher's relationship and interaction with the students

The literature points to several ways in which teachers can influence their students' self-esteem. The first and most influential way is that of the teacher's relationship and interaction with the students (Burns, 1982; Gurney, 1988; Humphrey, 2003; Lawrence, 2006; Plummer, 2007). Much of the literature on positive teacher relationship and interaction points to and revolves around the work of Carl Rogers (1991) and his three main conditions for change in the self-concept: empathy, unconditional positive regard, and genuineness. The first condition, empathy, involves focusing on the pupil's world and trying to see things from his/her perspective. The next condition is what Rogers calls 'positive regard' or having a non-judgmental attitude towards the pupil. This involves showing concern for the child, his strengths and weaknesses, interests, welfare and activities and providing support in times of stress (Burns, 1982). It also means the teacher accepts the child for who he is regardless of the feelings he or she might have regarding some aspects of the child's behaviour. This frees the child from the fear of being rejected and allows him to discuss his weaknesses openly. This is not suggesting the teacher lavish a child with praise as a means of showing his concern

for the child for, as Burns states, ‘children can sense concern, interest and appreciation and are not easily fooled by mere words of praise and affection or by insincere demonstrations of physical affection’ (p.367). The last of Rogers’ conditions is termed ‘genuineness’ and involves being ‘real’ with the pupil. This means the teacher is open about himself. He relates to the child as an individual and not a person exerting his authority over the pupil (p.368).

Humphrey (2003) and Lawrence (2006) emphasise the influence teachers’ verbal and non-verbal communication can have on children’s self-esteem. Lawrence highlights the destructive nature of negative comments stating that:

there is a positive and negative way of saying the same thing and that which is used is crucial in determining its effects on self-esteem’ (p.75).

Both Humphrey and Lawrence point to the importance of acceptance, of pupils and of self, in the teacher-pupil relationship.

Teacher behaviours thought to facilitate positive self-esteem

In addition to demonstrating empathy, acceptance and genuineness Burns suggests how teachers can be a positive influence on pupils’ self-esteem in: ‘Conditions for Effective Teacher Interaction with Pupil’ :

1. Make pupils feel supported by the teacher.
2. Make pupils feel responsible beings.
3. Make pupils feel competent.
4. Teach pupils to set realistic goals.
5. Help pupils evaluate themselves realistically.
6. Encourage realistic self-praise

(Burns, 1982, pp.393-398)

1. Make pupils feel supported by the teacher.

In suggesting that teachers need to help their students feel supported Burns especially insists on the idea of being attentive to the child’s needs without being ‘overwhelming’. This includes the teacher giving the child advice or making suggestions but then allowing the child to do the work on his/her own.

2. Make pupils feel responsible beings.

The reference to helping children to become responsible beings encompasses the notion of providing students with clear rules relating to acceptable classroom behaviour and of firmly and consistently enforcing these rules. Burns emphasises the role that clear limits play in

helping children make adequate choices and decisions which he stresses are the foundation of democracy.

3. Make pupils feel competent.

Burns suggests that teachers can make children feel competent by having positive views of children's abilities, by believing each student has 'a relatively untapped reservoir of abilities for thinking and learning' (p. 395). In addition to such positive expectations teachers need to provide a 'stimulating' environment for the child, the aim of which is to help the child grow intellectually.

4. Teach pupils to set realistic goals.

As students with negative self-concepts often set unrealistic goals for themselves (e.g. goals which are too high or too low), Burns advocates helping children set realistic individual goals in relationship to their past performances in order for the child to achieve a certain degree of success. He emphasises the necessity that the goal be fixed by both the teacher and the child in order for the child to feel responsible towards it. Burns also draws attention to the fact that goals can be set in the area of academic performance and also in relation to classroom behaviour.

5. Help pupils evaluate themselves realistically.

Burns underlines that children often evaluate themselves by comparing their own results to other, often higher achieving children in the class. He advises teachers to help children to see their present achievements in comparison to past achievements so that any progress made can be highlighted. In addition to this he suggests that teachers can nearly always find some aspect of the child's work worthy of praise and that in pointing such aspects out, the child will be encouraged to persevere in their efforts.

6. Encourage realistic self-praise

In order to develop a healthy sense of self, students must develop the habit of praising themselves for their successes. In this way they are not entirely dependent on the teacher for their evaluations and positive reinforcements.

Although not part of his list of 'teacher behaviours' felt to enhance children's self-esteem in the classroom, Burns strongly emphasises the need for teachers to possess a strong positive self-concept themselves as this acts as a foundation for teachers to be acceptant and supportive of their students.

Humphrey also suggests teacher behaviours thought to facilitate positive self-esteem in children, adapted from Gurney's original list of 'classroom conditions conducive to the enhancement of self-esteem' (Gurney, 1988, p.105-106). He claims:

Key teacher behaviours in facilitating positive self-esteem

1. Has warm and positive attitude to pupils
2. Is acceptant of pupils
3. Is acceptant of self
4. Democratically establishes minimal rules
5. Enforces rules consistently and with compassion
6. Uses open-ended questions
7. Shows reflective listening skills
8. Shows respect for pupils as persons
9. Encourages diversity in personality, activities and responses
10. Shows competent grasp of subject content
11. Uses praise effectively
12. Trains pupils to use self-referent verbal statements (SRVS)
13. Models SRVS
14. Plans and ensures that individual pupils predominantly achieve success
15. Provides excellent counselling skills when required

(Humphrey, 2003, p.132)

Both of these lists emphasise certain foundational aspects of teacher behaviour thought to positively influence children's self-esteem. The teacher's relationship, namely accepting and supporting students, is the first step indicated by both Humphrey and Burns. This is followed by the provision of clear boundaries and expectations as indicated by the establishment and enforcement of carefully selected essential classroom rules. A third aspect they have in common is the emphasis on helping students to engage in realistic self-appraisals and positive self-talk which is in line with attribution and cognitive behavioural theory.

In addition to their similarities, the lists put forth by Humphrey and Burns differ in various ways. Burns accents the value and positive outcomes of goal-setting in the classroom, an aspect that is at the centre of approaches linked to the concept of self-efficacy. Humphrey, on the other hand, emphasises the relational and interaction skills of the teacher which allow children to have a voice and exist in their own right such as 'reflective listening', 'showing respect for pupils', using democratic means to establish rules and 'encouraging diversity in personality, activities and responses'. Mention is also made by Humphrey of pedagogical competencies such as demonstrating a solid grasp of subject content and using open-ended questions. Finally, Humphrey draws attention, as does Burns in further sections of his book, to the importance of the teacher being acceptant of him/herself and of him/her demonstrating

this through positive self-referent verbal phrases which provide a model for children. Humphrey also mentions the provision of counselling skills when necessary. For Gurney from whose work the list derives, counselling skills can take on various forms in the classroom including providing training for children in the area of problem solving and goal-setting skills as well as in the area of social skills.

Classroom intervention strategies

In addition to teacher behaviour and relationship with pupils, numerous areas have been highlighted as being effective in influencing children's self-esteem. In the most recent literature, intervention strategies have revolved around two broad areas: those aimed at influencing the cognitive determinants of self-esteem and those directed at the social factors influencing self-esteem (Burden, 2005; Emler, 2001; Harter, 1999; Millar & Moran, 2007; Mruk, 1999).

I. Intervention strategies aimed at cognitive determinants

Interventions aimed at cognitive determinants are based on various theories. The work of James can be seen in many intervention strategies which aim to reduce the discrepancies between an individual's real and ideal self (Harter, 1999). The goal of these strategies is on the one hand to help individuals to adjust their thinking patterns and belief systems so as to reduce the discrepancy between aspirations and achievements and on the other hand to increase the various skills necessary for success in the desired areas (Emler, 2001; Harter, 1999; Pope et al., 1988).

This theory is linked to the areas of self-efficacy, attribution theory and locus of control, which focus on an individual's sense of agency (Burden, 2005). Based on the work of Bandura (1997) and Seligman (1995) these theories stress the need to make individuals aware of their thinking patterns and attributional styles and to provide them with the means to develop a greater sense of personal responsibility with regard to their lives. Burden highlights the need for interventions at this level stating:

The three-way link between capability, action and belief is crucial. It will not be enough, therefore, when working to help people overcome their learning difficulties, to improve competence or feeling of self-worth alone; there must also be an improved understanding of how the application of knowledge or skill leads to successful outcomes together with a belief in one's own capability in making that application.

(Burden, 2005, p.22)

1. Efficacy-based approaches:

Strategies which emphasise individual achievement, the use of goal setting and formative feedback procedures, and attempts to help children modify their beliefs about their ability (Millar and Moran, 2007) are all possible means of helping children increase in self-efficacy.

2. Cognitive behavioural approaches

Seligman (1995) and Dweck (2000) argue that rather than trying to spare a child from an experience with failure, educators and parents need to train children how to interpret that experience in an accurate, optimistic way. Seligman was able to test his theory with elementary school children through the use of cognitive therapy training in a pilot study called the Penn Prevention Program (pp.115-132). The training focused on cognitive training as well as on social skills training. The goal was to teach children how to become aware of their thoughts and to show them that their thoughts were 'verifiable' and 'changeable' (p.119). This was done through a four step process based on cognitive therapy. The process begins by teaching children to recognise the thoughts that spring up when they are feeling negative emotions through the use of a journal which helps them identify problems and the thoughts that accompany them. Once children identify these thoughts they are taught to evaluate them and to judge their accuracy. This is called 'gathering evidence'; all possible causes of the problem are noted and examined by the child in order to verify their accuracy. During the final stage, referred to as 'decatastrophizing', children are asked to imagine the worst, best and most likely consequences following a problem and to decide on the appropriate action to take. Through this type of cognitive training the children in Seligman's study were able to identify their negative thought patterns, take affirmative steps to change their behaviour when necessary and to see themselves in a positive way.

The researchers in the Penn Prevention Plan worked individually with children in order to help them to recognise their thoughts and to discuss the very private nature of them. However, there is some evidence that practices based on cognitive behavioural psychology can be effective when implemented in the form of group work (Squires, 2001; Emler, 2001) alone or as part of a larger programme (Spence, 1995; Fox & Boulton, 2003; Mruk, 1999). Activities which allow a forum for expression and discussion such as 'circle time' or 'class council' could be an area in which cognitive behavioural approaches could be implemented.

II. Intervention strategies aimed at social factors

Interventions aimed at modifying the social factors involved in the development of self-esteem revolve around efforts to increase the amount of approval support children receive from significant others (Emler, 2001; Harter, 1999; Humphrey, 2003). Given the important influence parents exert on their children throughout childhood and adolescence, the first logical step in modifying the social factors concerning children with low self-esteem advocated is to attempt to increase the amount of acceptance and approval of children's parents including practices which convey these qualities such as: 'making time for their children, paying attention, taking an interest, listening, encouraging initiative, being fair, and having clear and positive expectations' (Emler, 2001, p. 51). However, as Emler highlights, there are considerable practical limits to the amount of change which can be expected from parents including their own willingness to change. Based on these reasons it is important to explore the various means of increasing support from other significant others, namely peers.

As a means of gaining increased support from peers, Harter (1999) suggests two courses of action: improving children's skills and creating support groups for children.

1. Improving children's social skills

In reference to improving children's skills, Harter states:

For children who are accurately aware of negative peer reactions, attempts should focus on understanding the particular causes of their lack of acceptance. Do children lack attributes that are valued by peers, for example, attractiveness, athletic ability and interpersonal qualities that make them likable? If the deficiencies reside in the child, efforts may be directed toward improving the child's skills in these areas, realizing that there will be natural limits on the extent to which the child may be able to improve. For certain children who are neglected or rejected, social skills programs may be appropriate in the service of improving their likability.

(Harter, 1999, p. 335)

Emler (2001) also suggests intervention strategies promoting social skills as a means of developing friendships stating that, 'insofar as close friendships are valuable, then interventions that enhance the ability to form and hold on to these relationships could be expected to benefit self-esteem' (p. 51). Social skills training programmes which help children improve the skills thought to enable them to be accepted and valued by peers and to make and maintain friendships have been shown to be effective in increasing children's self-esteem (Fox and Boulton, 2003) and in reducing the chances of incidents of bullying

(Humphrey, 2003). Having identified peers as a source of low self-esteem in children in his research, especially in situations where bullying and teasing have occurred, Humphrey (2003) advocates interventions which revolve around assertion and social skills training. Lawrence (2005) mirrors this suggestion by proposing classroom and group activities centring on activities which also aim to teach children assertiveness.

2. Increasing peer support

Various practices have been suggested in the literature as a means of increasing peer support in the classroom. Group activities such as Circle Time, cooperative games and conflict resolution games and Philosophy for Children (P4C) have been advocated as activities which give children opportunities to learn to listen to each other, to gain increased awareness and understanding of others, to value differences and to develop attitudes of tolerance and respect (Lawrence, 2005; Mosley, 2005; Plummer, 2001; Plummer, 2007). Circle Time is a practice used in the classroom in which all participants including the teacher sit in a circle on the same level to discuss a topic or theme and/or to share ideas and feelings (Lang, 1998; Mosley, 2005; Taylor, 2006). Humphrey (2003) describes 'Circle Time' as a practice which 'offers a unique framework of possibilities for self-enhancement (p.134). It has also been suggested that the formal use of peer support programmes can be a means for all children to be listened to, to gain in self-confidence and self-esteem and to help children in their personal social and educational development (Charleton and David, 1997; Humphrey, 2003). Lawrence (2005) points out the positive role that whole school or class projects, including school concerts or performances can play in increasing peer support and contributing to a positive class/school ethos.

III. Other intervention strategies

1. Counselling on an individual level

Some educators suggest that certain children with low self-esteem might not be suited for group work, either because they are too anxious or because they display disruptive behaviour, and would benefit more from individual counselling sessions with the teacher or another qualified professional (Burns, 1982; Humphrey, 2004; Lawrence, 2005). Lawrence suggests a ten-week individual counselling programme the aim of which is 'to encourage children to express themselves verbally and to confide in the teacher so that they can express their hopes and fears without criticism' (p.122). During the programme the teacher is encouraged to discuss various areas with the child such as the child's personal strengths, fears and hopes for

the future, relaxation techniques and various means of acquiring social skills. Although individual time spent with the teacher discussing such issues could undoubtedly be beneficial to children with low self-esteem, questions of time, resources and counselling competence arise. Engaging in individual counselling with children logically would require a minimum amount of training and commitment on the part of the teacher. In addition to this, it would be helpful if not necessary for the teacher to have access to additional support in the classroom in order to conduct such sessions. As Humphrey (2003) appropriately highlights, many teachers currently work long hours under stressful conditions and may not have the time or means to be trained in counselling techniques or to commit to individual counselling sessions with children. One could also argue that teachers may not be the most appropriate counsellors due to their position of authority in the classroom and the close nature of the relationship with their pupils.

2. Internalisation of positive opinions of others: increasing personal responsibility

Harter (1999) highlights the importance for individuals of internalising the positive opinions of others in order not to become dependant on the approval of others and suggests educators use techniques which help children internalise such positive opinions so that they eventually become part of their own self-representations. She suggests employing strategies in which the child is made to feel actively responsible for his actions by: 1) helping the child recognize his role in producing positive outcomes, 2) by calling attention to the feeling of pride the child experiences during such positive outcomes and 3) by helping children to create for themselves their own personal goals or ideals toward which they may strive.

Increasing personal responsibility has also been highlighted in other literature on self-esteem as an important means of increasing an individual's sense of worth (Humphrey, 2003, Mruk, 1999). Mruk links the development of positive self-esteem to questions concerning universal values. He underlines the notion that certain values, such as courage, self-discipline, honour and selfless care, are universally recognised throughout various cultures and contribute to a positive sense of self-esteem by helping individuals feel worthy. 'Each time we act virtuously, or in a way that embodies that which we aspire to as being good and desirable, we find ourselves being worthy' (p.84). Humphrey (2004) has suggested that by promoting citizenship in the classroom not only do teachers help students to become socially and morally responsible individuals, they also allow them to experience feelings of worthiness that come from acquiring greater personal responsibility. Mruk (1999) also emphasises the importance

that ‘evidence of power or influence’ plays in fostering a positive sense of self (p. 85). In this vein, Harter (1999) and Humphrey (2004) advocate including children in decision making processes in the classroom and providing opportunities for their voices to be heard as important steps towards the development of their self-esteem (Harter, 1999; Humphrey, 2004). It has been advocated that teachers are able to contribute to children’s developing self-esteem not only through their behaviour and relationship with the children but also through the implementation of various teaching practices. In addition to the practices mentioned earlier in this section, various types of activities have been suggested as being effective in promoting a positive sense of self. These are discussed in the next section of this chapter when the focus shifts from theory to classroom practice.

3. Human Rights Education

In this same vein, human rights education had been advocated as a means of increasing children’s feelings of self-worth. Programmes which are structured around fostering children’s awareness and respect of children’s rights as stipulated in the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (UNICEF, 1990) have been shown to have a positive influence on children’s peer relations and their self-esteem (Covell & Howe, 2001; Sebba & Robinson, 2009). Such programmes aim to foster the values embodied in the UNCRC and to teach children to be responsible for respecting others’ rights. Within the UK, Osler and Starkey (1996), Save the Children Fund (2000), Hand (2000) and Brown and Jones (2006) have all contributed to effective practice in human rights education. Some studies have indicated that learning about rights and responsibilities impacts on children’s attitudes and behaviour. One study on the impact of the Rights Respecting School Award programme (UNICEF, 2010) provides evidence of that. This initiative led to increased confidence in children with regards to expressing themselves as well as increased respect and tolerance for the views of others. Children’s rights education has also been shown to lead to increases in acceptance among peers and to greater pupil self-esteem (Covell & Howe, 2001 ; Sabba & Robinson, 2009). Covell and Howe (2001) suggest that ‘children who learn they are worthy of respect, that they have rights, and that their government is officially committed to their present and future well-being are children who, in the words of one child, “feel respected and feel special” (p.30). Covell and Howe also emphasise that in learning about their own rights, children develop a sense of empathy for and understanding of others’ rights and that this leads to increased peer support overall (Covell & Howe, 2001).

Although this study did not use a complete human rights approach intervention, elements of human rights education were incorporated within the teaching practices, such as the right to have opinions listened to and views respected. To adopt a specific human rights approach would have required more work on the part of the collaborating teachers in terms of teaching about human rights and the history of human rights and this was not possible within the constraints of the study.

It has been advocated that teachers are able to contribute to children's developing self-esteem not only through their behaviour and relationship with the children but also through the implementation of various teaching practices. In addition to the practices mentioned earlier in this section, various types of activities have been suggested as being effective in promoting a positive sense of self. These are discussed in the next section of this chapter when the focus shifts from theory to classroom practice.

PSCE: A COMBINATION OF ACTIVITIES AIMED AT PROMOTING PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

In the primary classroom one of the vehicles used for implementing activities aimed at developing children's self-esteem is the PSCE curriculum. Activities introduced can include: cooperative and conflict resolution activities (Denis et al., 2000; Leleux, 2008; Plummer, 2004; Plummer, 2007) Circle Time (Galbraith & Alexander, 2005; Humphrey, 2003; Lawrence, 2005; Mosley, 2005), activities which promote a positive classroom ethos (Staquet, 2002) and Philosophy for Children (Trickey and Topping, 2006; Labé & Puech, 2004). The activities are divided into various categories throughout the literature according to the foundational skills thought to help children develop positive self-esteem. Some of these categories include: self-knowledge and knowledge of others in the classroom, learning about feelings and how to express feelings (self-expression & listening to others' verbal and non-verbal language), learning to trust, receiving positive feedback, and risk-taking activities (Lawrence, 1996; Plummer, 2001; Staquet, 2002), self-acceptance and self-reliance activities, and activities which promote cooperation and conflict resolution (Denis et al., 2000; Plummer, 2007) (See Table 2.1 for complete list of sample activities and their sources).

Table 2.1: Types of PSCE activities thought to promote self-esteem and their sources

Category/area of PSCE	Example activities	Sources
Self-knowledge & knowledge of others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal flag, coat of arms, totem pole. • Tossing the ball games, ‘what’s in my bag’ • Moving circles & ‘we both like...’ 	Clough & Holden, 2002 Canfield & Wells, 1996 Denis et al., 2000 Mosley, 2005 Staquet, C. (2002)
Feelings- learning about feelings and how to express feelings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moving circles • Circle time • ‘Today I feel...’ • Class Council 	Staquet, 2002 Mosley, 2005 Lawrence, 2006 Denis et al., 2000
Building trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leading the blind • Catching the blindfolded • The human pretzel • Tangles • Mirror talking • Statues • ‘Coco’ 	Lawrence, 2006 Lawrence, 2006 Denis et al., 2000 Mosley, 2005 Plummer, 2007 Denis et al., 2000 Denis et al., 2000
Self-acceptance and self-reliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class council • ‘Warm fuzzies’ • Pass the shell • Personal Flag 	Denis et al., 2000 Staquet, 2002 Plummer, 2007 Clough & Holden, 2002
Positive feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warm fuzzies • Pass the shell 	Staquet, 2000 Plummer, 2007
Cooperation & conflict resolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Musical balance • Donkey puzzle • Balancing your partner/back to back • Tangled up 	Plummer, 2007 Denis et al., 2000 Mosley, 2005 Plummer, 2007

Some examples of activities which promote self-knowledge and knowledge of others include activities such as having students make a personal flag, totem pole or collage which represents the mselves (Clough & Holden, 2002; Canfield & Wells, 1996) the use of games within Circle Time such as ‘tossing the ball games’ in which children name something interesting about themselves such as their favourite dessert or animal (Denis et al., 2000; Mosley, 2005), activities such as ‘what’s my bag’ in which pupils’ select meaningful objects to put in a bag or box which represent themselves (Canfield & Wells, 1996) or ‘moving circles’ in which children briefly discuss a topic in pairs before moving on to form another pair (Denis et al., 2000, Staquet, 2002).

‘Expression of feelings’ activities aim to enable children to identify their feelings and express them without the fear of rejection or judgement. Activities include completing ‘feeling inventories’ which can be shared or kept private, the use of circle time for the discussion of feelings or illustrating or writing about a particular time that elicited certain feelings (Canfield & Wells, 1996; Lawrence, 2005; Mosley, 2005; Plummer, 2001). Included in the expression of feelings is the practice of encouraging others and giving positive feedback. This can be implemented through activities such as ‘positive postings’ (Lawrence, 2005) or ‘Warm Fuzzies’ (Denis et al., 2000; Staquet, 2002) during which all pupils are encouraged to write positive comments about their classmates.

Some of the trust building activities include: ‘leading the blind’ (one child is blindfolded and the other leads him/her around the room or the school), ‘catching the blind’ (children work in pairs with one child falling back and the other catching him) or ‘the human pretzel’ (in groups of eight, children stand in a circle, close their eyes and take the hands of two different pupils in the circle after which they must untangle themselves back into a circle.) These activities are then followed up by a general plenary session in which the children are encouraged to express their own feelings regarding the activities as well as their ideas on basic principles of trust (Denis et al., 2000; Lawrence, 1996).

Background and pedagogical roots of activities

The activities cited above have their origins within various pedagogical and philosophical movements. Among these are the humanistic education movement based on the principles of humanistic psychology, the branch of the peace education movement which focuses on non-violent communication and conflict resolution, the critical pedagogy of Freire (1972) which

emphasises the democratic practice of empowerment through dialogue and critical thinking and practices linked to social psychology. Many of the concepts embedded in activities aiming to promote self-knowledge and self-acceptance developed within humanistic psychology were influenced strongly by the writings of Rogers. The foundations of humanistic education, as first promoted by Rogers (1994) and Maslow (1968), emphasised the common belief that 'all [students] have the potential for growth and to enhance and control this themselves' (Lang, 1998, p.4). Circle time practices emerged within this tradition and were based on the principles of: 'Awareness (knowing who I am), mastery (knowing what I can do) and social interaction (knowing how I function in the world of others) (Ballard, 1982 as cited in Lang, 1998, p 5).

The PSCE activities situated within the framework of cooperative games (Denis et al., 2000) are underpinned by the philosophies inherent within peace education. Peace education dating to the early 20th century has focussed on the implementation of non-violent communication skills, conflict resolution practices, anti-nuclearism, international understanding and human rights education (Raviv et al, 1999). Pioneered by the work of John Galtung (1976) peace education has traditionally emphasised the use of participatory practices and non-violent conflict resolution, as well as cooperative educational strategies and group work.. Hicks notes that with the current increase in bullying and racism in schools 'there are many valuable insights that can be drawn on from peace education' (2007, p10).

Activities and practices which focussed on group communication, allowing children a voice and nurturing critical thinking skills derive their origins from different sources including the empowerment and conscientization pedagogy of Friere, and those initiated by Fernand Oury within the Institutional Pedagogy movement whose practices were linked to elements within psychoanalysis and group therapy and elements of social psychology (Bertrand, 2003; Pain, 2010). The practices which emerged within these movements were based on the belief that communication between individuals within a group would enable them to reflect on and resolve problems collectively, to actively participate in their education and development and to develop personal and social responsibility (Bertrand, 2003; Freire, 1973; Oury, 2000).

The PSCE activities implemented in this study fall within the following French PSCE curriculum aims and objectives as stated in the official 2007 programmes:

In learning to debate issues with their classmates, students will gain understanding of the benefits of coming into contact with others. Listening to others is the first means of showing respect for others and of accepting differences. There are numerous ways in which this respect for differences ... may be practised including combating all forms of exclusion, welcoming new, isolated students, inclusion of children with special needs

(Civic education curriculum objectives- item 1, Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale, 2007, p.85, my translation)

By the end of the 3rd cycle (end of Primary School) students:

-should have understood and retained the rules of the class and of the school and their significance; knowing what is allowed and forbidden in the classroom, in school and during break time,

-should be able to respect the classroom and school rules and to contribute to the development of these rules,

-should be able to consider the consequences of their acts which are disruptive to the life of the group,

-should be able to engage in a discussion concerning the breaking of school regulations either for themselves or for a classmate, to explain or clarify a situation of conflict during allotted discussion time (débat réglé), and to be familiar with steps to take which lead to its resolution,

-should have acquired respect for self and for others, and should demonstrate this in the way he/she speaks,

-should be conscious of rights and responsibilities in the classroom and in school,

-should be able to engage in discussion when confronted with situations of conflict.

(Detailed curriculum objectives concerning the knowledge, skills and attitudes expected of children by the end of primary school, Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale, 2007, p. 86, my translation)

Table 2.2 indicates the ways in which each activity used in the study contributes to the aims and content of PSCE in France.

Table 2.2: PSCE activities situated within French curriculum aims

PSCE activities implemented	French PSCE Curriculum Aims					
	Learning to discuss and debate issues	Learning to listen to others	Learning to respect oneself/learning about oneself	Learning to accept differences and to respect others	Taking a stand against rejection: including and accepting others	Gaining awareness of rights and responsibilities in the classroom
Back to back		√		√		
Blind sculptors	√	√				
Body building	√	√		√	√	
Comfortable Coco		√			√	
The dizzy bottle				√	√	
Draw a conflict	√	√		√		
Feelings sculptures	√	√	√	√		
Hands and feet	√	√		√	√	
Knock, knock			√	√	√	
Leading the blind			√		√	
Mirror talking		√	√	√	√	
Moving circles	√	√	√	√	√	
Musical balance		√		√	√	
Personal flag		√	√	√	√	
Silent greetings			√	√	√	
Statues		√	√			
Tangles	√	√			√	
Touch something			√	√	√	
The two donkeys	√	√		√	√	
Warm fuzzies			√	√	√	
What a ball		√			√	
Philosophy for Children	√	√	√	√	√	√
Class council	√	√	√	√	√	√

PREVIOUS SELF-ESTEEM CLASSROOM INTERVENTION PROGRAMMES AND THEIR OUTCOMES

Meta-analyses

As Emler (2001) reports, a considerable number of self-esteem intervention programmes have been designed and implemented throughout the past two decades. A large majority of the programmes specifically located within the context of the classroom have issued claims of positive outcomes linked to the implementation of such programmes but have failed to provide any empirical research supporting such claims. Emler suggests that the commercial nature of most of these programmes interferes with the desire to invest in any form of empirical evaluation. 'It should therefore come as no surprise that the level of effort invested in developing and running programmes to raise self-esteem has not been remotely matched by efforts to evaluate these programmes' he states (p.49).

The most comprehensive review of the literature on evaluation to date was conducted by Haney and Durlak (1998) Their meta-analysis of 116 studies of self-esteem compared interventions published before 1992. Among the programmes reviewed, just over half were school based programmes with the majority targeting the six to twelve year age range. The review findings show measurable increases in self-esteem in over 60 percent of the programmes. These increases appeared to be linked to the following conditions found in the various programmes:

- Programmes were found to be more effective if the main focus was specifically changing self-esteem or self-concept as opposed to programmes which focussed on other desired changes such as changes in behaviour or social skills
- Effectiveness was also higher for treatment programmes than for prevention programmes
- In addition to this Haney and Durlak found that programmes based on theoretical or empirical rationale and those which included the use of a control group were also shown to have more positive results with regards to raising self-esteem.

Although Haney and Durlak provide no discussion as to why such conditions were more effective than others, some hypotheses may be advanced. It could be assumed that treatment programmes were possibly more successful due to the initial selection of the sample which is

directed to a section of the population with more room for upward change (Emler, 2001). Likewise, programmes specifically geared to enhance self-esteem and those based on theoretical or empirical rationale could target various components linked to self-esteem which have been shown to be effective in past research increasing chances of improved self-esteem.

Elbaum and Vaughn (2001) conducted a meta-analysis of school based interventions to enhance the self-concept of students with learning disabilities (LD). They reviewed 64 intervention studies implemented between 1975 and 1997. The types of interventions reviewed included the following categories: counselling, academic, mediated, physical, sensory-perceptual and other. Their analysis investigated the effectiveness of school-based interventions whose objective was the enhancement of self-concept of students with LD. The findings indicate a higher success rate for programmes conducted with young adolescents than programmes conducted with primary school children or older adolescents. In addition to this, academic intervention programmes were shown to be more effective with elementary/primary school children, whereas counselling programmes were shown to be more successful with lower and upper secondary school students. Despite this finding, several counselling interventions were found to be effective with primary school age children. These interventions involved working in small groups with a school counsellor and incorporated either the use of activities or games which covered the areas of 'relaxation, expression of feelings, disclosure of self-perceptions, positive self-thoughts, and mutual reinforcement' (p.320) or training in ways to engage in positive self-talk.

Individual studies

Burnett (1996) conducted a study which investigated the impact of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and Rational Emotive Therapy (RET) programmes on children's self-esteem. His study took place within two schools located in similar socio-economic areas in Australia with a total of 116 children (49 in grade 4 and 50 in grade 6). An eight-week CBT programme was implemented in School A whereas an eight-week RET programme was implemented in school B. Both programmes were administered by a Master's level Guidance Officer experienced in the area of self-esteem enhancement implementation. The results of the study showed improvements in the area of positive self-talk but showed no significant increase in self-esteem. In his conclusions Burnett questions the brief nature of the study and suggests that long term changes in self-talk could perhaps lead to increases in self-esteem. However, as in many studies investigating changes in self-esteem (Haney and Durlak, 1998), this study

provides no follow-up phase to assess the long-term effects of CBT and RET programmes on children's positive self-talk. This would have been an important addition to the study given the highly brief nature of the intervention. .

Millar and Moran's (2007) study aimed to investigate the influence that two different approaches to self-esteem enhancement, circle-time and 'efficacy-based approaches', would have on children's self-esteem. The study took place over the course of four months with a total of 519 students from 10-12 years old in 21 primary schools in the East of Scotland. The participants were divided into three groups: a circle-time methodology group (comprised of eight teachers and 214 children), an efficacy-based approach group (comprised of seven teachers and 180 children) and a control group (comprised of six teachers and 125 children). The researchers administered two pre and post self-report measures of self-esteem: Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale (RSE) and a modified version of Tafarodi and Swann's Self Liking/Self-Competence Scale (SLCS). The interventions were conducted by the class teachers. The teachers chosen for the Circle-Time intervention group were committed to and experienced in Circle-Time. The teachers in the efficacy based-group favoured an approach to self-esteem enhancement based on developing children's belief in their ability to achieve their goals and continued to employ strategies which would support these beliefs. The teachers in the control group continued their previous classroom practices of which self-esteem enhancement was not the focus.

The outcomes of the study showed increases in both measures and in all sub-scales in both the circle-time group and the efficacy-based group. The data from the control group demonstrated a mixed pattern in the sub-scales and no significant change in the whole scale scores. The results of the sub-score analysis showed a highly significant ($p= 0.009$) improvement in the domain of self-worth in the self-esteem group but showed no significant ($p=0.268$) improvement for the area of self-competence. These results are reversed in the efficacy group whose scores show significant differences in self-competence ($p=0.015$) and no significance ($p = 0.061$) on the self-worth sub-scale. Millar and Moran point to the way in which each intervention influenced a separate component of self-esteem.

In five of the six categories increases for females were statistically significant whereas gains for males in all categories were non-significant. This indicates that the interventions influenced boys and girls differently. Millar and Moran put forth two suggestions which may account for this difference. Their first hypothesis points to the fact that the teachers in the

study were all female which may have had more influence on female participants as role models with whom they could identify. Another suggestion was that the goal orientations of boys and girls might differ in nature which would have influenced the outcomes. Regarding these differences between the outcomes for boys and for girls, Millar and Moran stress the need for concern among researchers and educators that boys may benefit less from such strategies.

Galbraith and Alexander (2005) conducted an action research case study in a classroom of 28 nine-ten year olds (a primary six class from Northern Ireland and a year five class from another area of the UK). Within the class itself, a target group of four boys and two girls who performed poorly at literacy was chosen. The class teacher employed a variety of intervention strategies aimed at improving literacy, self-esteem and locus of control. This included activities such as Circle Time, interactive teaching methods and discussions with children based on the practices of Solution Focussed Brief Therapy (SFBT). Circle Time was regularly implemented as a whole class activity and aimed to help children gain an understanding and awareness of themselves and of others in the classroom and to improve thinking skills and social skills such as empathy and cooperation. The target children received individual support focussing on improving their self-concept and locus of control in the area of literacy as well as personalised programmes to enhance their literacy skills. The study also included a variety of approaches thought to enhance children's self-esteem such as: specific classroom activities aimed at developing children's thinking skills, regular positive teacher feedback for each child, cooperative group work using the 'jigsaw' approach, a 'success board' with postings of the achievements made by the target children, and a class trip. In reference to their eclectic approach, Galbraith and Alexander state that 'self-esteem enhancement became, then, not merely a series of structured lessons, but part of the class ethos- a process rather than a product' (p. 30).

Self-esteem was measured using Lawrence's Self-Esteem Checklist (1996) for each pupil in the target group. Self-esteem and locus of control were assessed through a questionnaire at the beginning and end of the study. Within the class as a whole, 16 of the children's scores improved, nine remained at the same level and 2 decreased slightly. Four of the target children showed a slight improvement in self-esteem scores with the other two remaining the same. The findings showed girls as having made greater gains in the area of internality (reliance on self-effort) than boys which confirmed previous research that locus of control is

affected by gender (Findley and Cooper, 1983). The researchers point to their study as evidence that self-esteem and locus of control are susceptible to change within the context of the classroom even if this change is slight.

Trickey and Topping (2006) conducted a study on the influence of Collaborative Philosophical Inquiry on children's academic self-concept and social skills. Five experimental and three control primary mainstream classes from Scotland took part in the study. The intervention conducted in the experimental classes used Cleghorn's (2002) Thinking through Philosophy Programme which was thought to promote critical and independent thinking skills. Over the course of seven months teachers from the experimental classes, led one-hour sessions per week with their students. The control classes continued with their previous curriculum. A total of 119 students from four of the five experimental classes completed pre and post academic self-concept measure using the MALS self-esteem measure as did 52 pupils from two of the three control classes. 25 experimental students selected from the five experimental classes (five children from each class) and 22 control pupils from the 3 control classes (7 or 8 children from each class) completed the TOPS (Taxonomy of Problematic Social Situations) social skills measure.

The results of the study showed larger gains in learner self-concept for the experimental group than for the control group with larger overall self-esteem gains for girls than for boys. Trickey and Topping suggest that the larger gains for girls could be due to a more affirming climate created by the context of Collaborative Philosophical Inquiry which reduces the threat to pupil self-esteem and might encourage girls to take more risks and to contribute to collaborative discussion. No significant larger increase in social skills in the experimental group was found.

No investigation into the positive impact of this intervention was sought. The researchers do, on the other hand stress the need for research in this area and call for longitudinal studies of self-esteem and social behaviour. They also emphasise the need to investigate the 'sustainability of gains across time and contexts' especially during the transition period from primary to secondary education (p.612).

This overview of the outcomes of previous studies on the results of classroom based self-esteem programmes points to some gains in self-esteem through the use of certain PSCE activities and practices. As mentioned previously, the PSCE curriculum is an area through which teachers may be able to positively influence children's self-esteem. The next section

describes the curriculum guidelines for PSCE in France at the time of the study and discusses the issues of training and resources for educators in this area.

THE ROLE OF PSCE IN FRENCH PRIMARY EDUCATION

As noted in the introductory chapter, the emphasis in French primary schools is on traditional methods, authoritarianism and strong teacher control but this is changing. Despite accounts that children's rights are not being respected in the classroom (Merle, 2005) the most recent programmes in the area of PSCE in France currently provide a basis for valuing children and ensuring their rights are recognised. This section gives an overview of the official programmes in use at the time the case studies were conducted (September 2007 to June 2008).

Citizenship education in France

'Civic and moral instruction' which began in France under the Third Republic became 'civic education' in 1976 during the Haby Reform of comprehensive education (Starkey, 2000). However, it would not be until the 1980s that civic education would have its own official programmes, curriculum instructions and timetable requirements (Starkey, 2000). Citizenship education especially has become a central objective in recent programmes, due to the growing number of aggressions and incivilities currently found within schools (Monetti, 2005). Monetti (2005) writes:

Developing a sense of collective values [through citizenship education] in school is thought to allow schools to combat incivilities to fight against the increase of individualism and to contain the growth of 'communitarian' phenomenon' (p.14 my translation).

Starkey (2000) confirms this idea stating that the goal of French state education was and continues to be to form a common culture, 'a single national culture defined as Republican', through a single curriculum (p. 42). He emphasises that state education in France :

does not recognize difference, but rather starts from the premise that, within the republic, all citizens are equal. Inequalities are deemed to stem from family background and therefore are irrelevant to the school which is part of the public sphere. (p. 43)

The State is responsible for transmitting national values (liberté, égalité, fraternité and human rights) which means they belong to the public sphere.

Starkey refers to this pervasive ideology of the school as an essential tool in promoting the integration of young people into a democratic culture. In this regard he cites French writer Dominique Schnapper (1994) who states that:

School is not just for transmitting a national ideology and a common historical memory through the curriculum. On a deeper level, like the political nation, the school forms a constructed space in which students, like citizens, are treated equally irrespective of their family or social background. It is a place, both literally and as a concept, which is constructed in opposition to the real and existing inequalities of society and which stands out against the forces of discrimination found in civil society. The concept of the school is, like the concept of citizenship, impersonal and formal. By understanding the idea of school as community, children will learn to understand and feel included in the political nation.

(Dominique Schnapper, 1994 as cited in Starkey, 2000, p.43)

Although this ideology is an integral part of the culture and largely accepted, there is no general consensus in the literature as to how citizenship education should be implemented (Albertini, 1992; Galichet, 2005; Monetti, 2005) In addition to this, much of the literature in French in the area of PSCE is designed for secondary education, and many of the publications specifically dealing with PSCE at the primary level concentrate uniquely on one aspect of PSCE namely, the implementation of civic education. However, some European authors have recently published practice-based pedagogical guides in this domain which include a wide range classroom activities (Staquet, 2002; Leleux, 2008). Although these publications do not specifically address the French curriculum guidelines, they do provide many ideas and example lessons for teachers in the area of PSCE.

Another issue of concern is the lack of training offered to teachers in this area. Apart from the National Curriculum programme guidelines and a few recent publications, very few opportunities exist for teachers to learn about and to develop their practices in the area of PSCE. Some training is offered at the initial teacher education level training for student teachers, however, the number of hours is often insufficient and many teacher educators are not aware of the diverse practices available in this area. For example, at the University Teacher Training Institute in Alsace (IUFM d'Alsace) training in the area of PSCE at the time of writing (2007-2009) is situated within a mixed discipline module of 18 hours which also covers the areas of philosophy of education, educational ethos, various educational models, teacher responsibility and teachers' professional code of ethics. This leaves little time to

explore the various practices and most often concentrates on civic education and teaching about democratic institutions within the context of France.

Current curriculum objectives in the area of PSCE in France

PSCE in France falls under the heading Education Civique or ‘civic education’ in the 2007 official programmes and Instruction Civique et Morale (civic and moral instruction) in the most recent 2008 programmes. The overarching objective stated in the programme guidelines is ‘to gain an awareness of the links between personal freedom, the constraints of life in society, and the maintenance of shared values’ (Ministère de l’Education National, 2007). The text also emphasises the nature of this area of education stating that citizenship education is not solely about acquiring a certain ‘knowledge’ but rather about the practical learning of certain behaviours and attitudes. In addition to the learning of certain behaviours the programme advocates the development of children’s personal ‘initiatives’ with regards to the undertaking and contribution to various types of ‘projects’. It is suggested that such projects could be situated within one or various disciplines or could include some involvement in community life.

The official curriculum guidelines describe four main areas: The child’s active participation in their school, their role as a citizen in their community, and role as a French citizen, and the child’s discovering and becoming aware of the world around them. The area of active participation specifically addresses such issues as: learning to discuss and to debate issues in the classroom, learning to listen to and to respect others and learning to accept differences insofar as these differences do not undermine universal human rights (as stated in *La déclaration des droits de l’homme et du citoyen*). The official programme suggests as well that numerous occasions should be provided to enable children to take a stand against all forms of rejection, to be welcoming to classmates, in particular to new students, and to make efforts to include and accept children with special needs. It is also suggested that teachers take an active stance in preventing various forms of violence including providing support for children who are excluded or who are experiencing academic failure. The importance of parental involvement in these matters is emphasised through an additional section added to the 2007 programmes which did not exist in the previous programmes specifying the efficacious nature of involving parents in the prevention of violence.

The area of citizenship within the community revolves around informing children of the various roles and function of their local government and community representatives, especially in the domains which concern them such as school and community life. The guidelines for this area suggest a visit to the town hall in the area where the school is located. With regards to the area of national citizenship children are expected to learn about the differences between a monarchy and a democracy, about the history and implications of the declaration of human rights and to briefly learn about the history of the French Republic, and about the different elections and methods of voting.

The last area of PSCE education in upper primary focuses on raising students' awareness of the world around them. According to the guidelines, teachers must develop their students' curiosity and strive to raise their geographical and cultural awareness of the world around them. This large area of PSCE begins with the children learning about Europe, the overseas regions and territories of France and the other parts of the world. It also includes learning about inequalities in the world, about the notion of solidarity, about children's rights and places in the world where these rights are not respected and finally about responsibility for the environment.

The objectives for PSCE in the 2007 programmes which were specifically addressed in this study were the following (for complete list of objectives, see Appendix 2):

By the end of primary school children should have understood and retained:

- that children have rights and in particular rights with regard to education, safety, and health
- the universal values which may not be compromised (based on the *Déclaration des droits de l'homme et du citoyen*, in reference in particular to Article 1)
- the rules of the class and of the school and their significance; knowing what is allowed and forbidden in the classroom, in school and during inter-school time.

Children should be able to:

- respect the classroom and school rules and to contribute to the development of these rules
- consider the consequences of their acts which are disruptive to the life of the group
- **engage in a discussion concerning the breaking of school regulations either for themselves or for a classmate, to explain or clarify a situation of conflict during allotted discussion time (débat réglé), and to be familiar with steps to take which lead to its resolution.**
- participate in the elaboration of a group project including occupying various roles in and leading different stages of the project

With regards to attitudes, children should begin to:

- **acquire respect for self and for others, to demonstrate this in the way one speaks**
- be conscious of the rights and responsibilities in the classroom and in school

(Ministère de l'Éducation National, 2007, p.86, my translation)

The objectives in bold are specified in the programmes as skills or attitudes to be acquired starting in upper primary and continuing throughout lower secondary. This allows teachers the freedom to help children develop these skills and attitudes without the expectation that children will have mastered them by the end of primary. The two class teachers used a variety of practices which were thought to develop these skills and attitudes in children including: class councils, circle time, cooperative games and philosophy for children as well as the establishment of a general positive classroom ethos.

This section has discussed the history and context of PSCE in France. This area of the curriculum has historically revolved around the idea forming citizens through the assimilation of one common culture and value system. This focus has recently been broadened to include the development of skills and attitudes which enable children to respect each other and promote equality, freedom and democracy within the classroom itself. However, many teachers lack training, information and materials necessary to implement these new programmes which often results in the PSCE curriculum being reduced to an introduction to the democratic institutions in France. Concerns that the rights of children are not being respected in some French classrooms have also been raised. It is within this context that the current study aimed to investigate the various ways the PSCE programmes could be implemented in France on different levels and to explore the possible influences such practices might have on children's self-esteem.

This review of the literature has enabled us to situate the current study within the larger body of research. The contributions from the various areas of psychology underline the many variables which are thought to contribute to the development of self-esteem. These variables include the importance of the social world in which the child evolves including the influence of significant others, in particular, parents, peers and authority figures such as teachers. The effect of an individual's thoughts and attitudes on his/her behaviour has also been highlighted as a crucial element in the construction of self-esteem. It has been advocated that certain teacher behaviours in addition to classroom interventions which encourage self-knowledge and expression, self-efficacy, tolerance and respect for others and evidence of power or

influence could be effective in fostering healthy self-esteem in the classroom. It has also been suggested that some of the traditional practices in the French primary classroom could be altered by providing more space for personal expression and by giving students a voice in matters. Given that PSCE is a relatively unexplored area in France, it was felt that a study which focussed on PSCE practices and their influence on children's self-esteem within the French classroom would be an important addition to the body of literature.

The purpose of this study therefore was to explore and describe the role of personal, social and citizenship education (PSCE) in fostering positive self-esteem in two classrooms of 7-11 year old children located in France. The central question to be explored was:

Practices linked to personal, social and citizenship education (such as Circle Time, Class Councils, Philosophy for Children and Co-operative games) aim to encourage children to value their identity and respect themselves and others, to develop a capacity for empathy and listening, to work co-operatively and to be responsible for themselves and for their community. How might such practices influence children's self-esteem in the French primary school?

The next chapter describes the context of the research including the sample and methods chosen for the research as well as the reasons supporting such choices, and details of the ways in which the study was conducted.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This chapter sets out the research questions, and discusses in detail the research design and the rationale for this, and the methods of analysis. The first section describes how the researcher's philosophical standpoint shaped the methodological approach of the study.

THEORETICAL ASSUMPTIONS AND RESEARCH PARADIGMS

In the process of conducting research a researcher brings a set of assumptions about the nature of reality and the nature of knowledge. These assumptions influence the nature of the research questions posed, the methodology chosen to answer those questions and how the findings are presented. Historically there has been a conflict between the two main paradigms employed in researching educational problems: positivism and interpretivism (Husen, 1999).

Thomas Kuhn first used the term paradigm, in the context of research, in his book *The structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1970) to refer to the way in which scientists understand the world and the nature of scientific knowledge (Crotty, 2004). Kuhn emphasised the pervasiveness of such beliefs in influencing the view of what is to be studied (Crotty, 2004).

There are three areas which situate research and researchers within a particular paradigm (Cohen et al, 2004; Crotty, 2004; Wellington, 2000):

- Ontology- assumptions about the nature of reality
- Epistemology- assumptions about the origin, nature and limits of human knowledge
- Methodology – ‘the activity or business of choosing, reflecting upon, evaluating and justifying methods’ used (Wellington, 2000, p. 22)

Although some argue (Pring, 2004; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Wellington, 2000) that, in practice, the lines between positivism and interpretivism are not as hermetic as they have been described to be in the past, it is nonetheless necessary to identify and describe the philosophical assumptions inherent in each of the paradigms in order for a researcher to position themselves with regard to the current debate and issues involved in these (Holliday, 2002). Indeed, ‘whenever one examines a particular methodology, one discovers a complexus of assumptions buried within it’ (Crotty, 2004, p.66).

In the next section, the ontology, epistemology and methodology of the positivist and interpretivist paradigms are considered.

Positivism

Positivism, which emerged during the 17th and 18th centuries and was popularised by Auguste Comte during the 19th century, was a shift away from the theory of knowledge of the metaphysical school of thought (science as speculation) towards a belief that all knowledge and therefore all scientific knowledge is obtained empirically (Crotty, 2004; Cohen et al., 2000; Robson, 2004). The positivist paradigm operates under the ontology that ‘out there’ in the world exists a stable, law-like objective reality independent of human thought. The underlying epistemology of positivism is that knowledge is ‘objective, value-free, generalizable and replicable’ (Wellington, 2004, p.15). In this way positivists hold the belief that it is possible to arrive at the truth through the careful use of appropriate methods of inquiry. The emphasis in research is on strict observations, measuring and recording conducted by detached, objective researchers. Through research, positivists attempt to describe natural laws and outcomes with the belief that it is possible to know the world, to predict and to control it (Cohen et al, 2000).

Interpretivism

Whereas researchers within the positivist paradigm seek to explain phenomena within a cause and effect model, those within the interpretive paradigm make understanding their goal (Crotty, 2004; Cohen et al., 2000; Guba & Lincoln, 2005). The interpretivist paradigm adheres to an ontology in which reality is the product of subjective experience. This means that reality is shifting and emergent and that multiple realities exist depending on individuals and contexts and situates human beings as subjective meaning-makers (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Researchers in this paradigm adhere to the belief that human beings are continually in the process of understanding the world they live in and therefore are constructing subjective meanings in their own particular context as they engage with the reality in which they find themselves by means of various interpretive strategies (Cohen et al, 2000; Creswell, 2003). The epistemology underpinning interpretivism identifies knowledge as interpretation. It therefore confers meaning to the role of the researcher and the researcher’s perspective. The interpretative researcher thus believes that reality is a human construct and not something out

there to be discovered (Wellington, 2004). It is for this reason that researchers working within this paradigm use research methods such as interviews and observation as they contribute to the building up of multiple perspectives (Robson, 2004). It is also recognised that the researcher is not able to maintain a detached objective stance and that he/she inevitably influences the research context and needs to account for this. (Crotty, 2004). The researcher working within the interpretive paradigm acknowledges that there are no 'true or valid' interpretations but rather 'useful interpretations'. This ultimately influences the conclusions drawn from the research undertaken.

Critical Theory

It has been argued that a third paradigm exists (Carr & Kemmis, 1986), the critical theory paradigm. The critical theory paradigm, which is similar to the interpretive paradigm, emerged during the late 1960s through the work of Jurgen Habermas. Habermas questioned the interpretivist researcher's goal of simply understanding and suggested that knowing the meanings people attributed to events was not enough. Instead, he felt that researchers must strive to know where those meanings come from, arguing that people's understandings can be distorted due to hidden power structures of which they themselves are unaware (Crotty, 2004, Cohen et al., 2000). Therefore, the critical theory paradigm differs from the interpretive paradigm in that its objective is not merely to understand but also to challenge the status quo and to bring about change (Crotty, 2004; Cohen et al., 2000). Critical theory has a distinctive political orientation (Lakowski, 1999). Its central focus is on forms of oppression. Researchers working in the critical paradigm seek to 'locate the cause of the collective understandings of social groups in ideology' with the overall goal of emancipation (Carr & Kemmis, 1986, p.138). Critical theory research is by definition involved in action. Another key figure in critical theory, Paulo Freire, emphasises the foundational principle that 'thinking does not separate itself from action' (Crotty, 2004, p.149). Crotty summarises the task of critical theory research stating that:

Critical forms of research call current ideology into question, and initiate action, in the cause of social justice. In this type of inquiry spawned by the critical spirit, researchers find themselves interrogating commonly held values and assumptions, challenging conventional social structures, and engaging in social action. (p.157)

Researchers working within this paradigm make use of methodologies such as critical ethnography and action research (Crotty, 2004; Guba & Lincoln, 2005; Kincheloe & McLaren, 2005; Robson, 2004). Action research in an educational context is usually non political and is generally undertaken by the teacher in the classroom who will systematically, critically and self-critically describe and interpret the phenomena of the action in which they are engaged, in order to improve it (Bassey, 1990). Although I had no political motive in terms of this research and my key aim was to understand the myriad of factors which influence children's self-esteem, some would argue that the decision to use an intervention places the study within the critical theory paradigm. However, the use of intervention was chosen in response to only one of the three research questions underpinning the study. The first two research questions: 'how does self-esteem develop/evolve in the primary classroom' and 'what are the factors which contribute to an increase or decrease in children's self-esteem in the classroom' involved understanding the existing factors, whereas in order to answer the third question- 'what influence, if any, do certain PSCE practices have on children's self-esteem'- it was necessary to instigate an intervention.

Methodological Considerations

Many authors argue that distinctions between paradigms are not as clearly defined as they are purported to be and that the complexity of research questions require appropriate and well considered methods which may or may not fall into one specific paradigm (Crotty, 2004; Pring, 2004; Wellington, 2004). In this vein Pring states that:

It is this failure to recognize the complexity of enquiry and of the nature of that which is being enquired into, which causes the blurring of the distinctions between the so-called paradigms and results in the sharp dichotomy between them, characterized by contrasting conceptions of 'truth', 'reality' and 'objectivity'.

(Pring, 2004, p.48-49)

Some authors today suggest that methodological approaches found within the two main paradigms can actually complement each other (Creswell, 2009; Robson, 2004; Wellington, 2004). Wellington refers to this as 'methodological pragmatism' (p. 23). Schatzman and Strauss (1973, as cited in Wellington, 2004, p. 23) call the field researcher 'a methodological pragmatist':

He sees any method of inquiry as a system of strategies and operations designed-at any time- for getting answers to certain questions about events which interest him.
(Wellington, 2004, p.23)

Crotty (2004) advocates that as researchers we need to ‘devise for ourselves a research process that serves our purposes best, one that helps us more than any other to answer our research question (p.216).

As a researcher my aim was to understand and to interpret the meanings individuals attach to certain parts of their lives. While my assumptions about knowledge and my goal of understanding locate me within the interpretive paradigm, I have espoused the position of Crotty (2004) and others (Patton, 1990; Wellington, 2004) that researchers should reject the restrictions imposed by paradigms as unhelpful because they can lead to decisions based on disciplinary prescriptions rather than situational appropriateness. I therefore chose a methodology which appeared to me most likely to answer my research questions, rejecting the dichotomy of research procedures into qualitative and quantitative methods.

A pragmatic approach- combining methods

The use of mixed methods in research design has become increasingly accepted and common among researchers (Bryman, 2006). It has been argued that the use of a mixed methods approach may provide a more complete and integrated picture of a complex phenomenon and that drawing on the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative methods can lead to greater understanding of a research problem (Creswell, 2009; Gilbert, 2008). Bryman, (2006) presents a list of sixteen justifications in favour of the use of mixed methods within research including increasing validity through triangulation, completeness, explanation and credibility. Although there has been some discussion on the existence of an additional paradigm –the mixed-method paradigm- related to this practice (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004), Gilbert et al. (2008) and Niaz (2008) emphasise the contradictory nature of the positivist and interpretivist paradigms in terms of their ontology and epistemology which would make it impossible for researchers to situate themselves within both paradigms at the same time. Instead of situating researchers within a separate paradigm Gilbert et al. state that that these researchers are using what is called a ‘pragmatic approach’ to methodology (p. 139). By accepting methods traditionally ascribed to interpretivist and positivist paradigms such researchers ascribe to the view that different methods should not be ‘treated as exclusive to a particular perspective’ (p.139).

Drawing on the position defined in the pragmatic approach as cited above, I considered both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection when designing my research and concluded that a combination of methods within a case study framework would be the most effective strategy for understanding self-esteem in the classroom. As discussed below, I gathered quantitative data through the use of self-esteem questionnaires and structured lesson observation schedules which complemented the qualitative data which I gathered using in-depth semi-structured interviews. As Bryman suggests, this approach was thought to provide ‘completeness’ and a ‘more comprehensive account of the area of inquiry’, to contribute to deeper explanation of the findings, and to provide triangulation of the data (2006, pp. 105-106). The aspect of triangulation of the study is discussed in detail later.

CASE STUDY

The research reported in this thesis comprised in-depth case studies of two classes, each in a different primary school. Case studies in the two schools and of individual pupils were undertaken as I believed that using a case study approach would enable me to best answer the first two of my research questions (‘how does self-esteem develop/evolve in the primary classroom’ and ‘what are the factors which contribute to an increase or decrease in children’s self-esteem in the classroom’). As part of the research design, I decided to use an intervention to provide a lens through which to understand the classroom practices impacting upon children’s self-esteem, and to provide data which would allow me to answer my third research question (‘what influence, if any, do certain PSCE practices have on children’s self-esteem’). The following section first discusses the use of case study and then explains the use of intervention within that framework.

Cohen et al (2000, p.181) describe case study as:

A specific instance that is frequently designed to illustrate a more general principle... It provides a unique example of real people in real situations, enabling readers to understand ideas more clearly than simply by presenting them with abstract theories or principles.

A case study approach typically involves qualitative research methods such as semi-structured/unstructured interviews and observations, but may also include quantitative methods such as questionnaires. Its main aim is to understand in depth a particular case.

Stake (2005) identifies three types of case study: intrinsic, instrumental and collective, focusing on the purposes of the case study. An 'intrinsic case study' is the study of one particular case. This type of case study is undertaken when it is the case itself and its particularities that are of interest (Stake, 2005). An instrumental case study, on the other hand chooses the 'case' because it represents a more general issue to be studied. The instrumental case serves as a springboard to understand a particular context (Stake, 2005). It is also possible to study several cases at the same time in order to come to a certain understanding of a 'general condition'. This is referred to as 'multiple case study' or 'collective case study'. Stake emphasises that the different cases making up this type of case study are not necessarily chosen because they have something in common but rather 'they are chosen because it is believed that understanding them will lead to a better understanding, and perhaps better theorizing, about a still larger collection of cases' (p. 446).

Yin identifies three types of case study in terms of their outcomes (2003): 'exploratory', 'descriptive' and 'explanatory'. An 'exploratory' case study serves as a pilot to other studies or research questions, whereas a 'descriptive' case study provides narrative accounts, and an explanatory approach is chosen when the aim is to develop conceptual categories and to generate theories.

Yin (2003) argues that multiple case studies have greater analytical benefits and appears to favour multiple case study design over single case study design, pointing to the risk of 'putting all of your eggs in one basket' (p.53). He proposes that 'the evidence from multiple case studies is often considered more compelling' and suggests that 'the overall study is regarded as being more robust'. He acknowledges, however, that 'multiple case studies can require extensive resources and time beyond the means of a single student or independent research investigator' (p.47).

Critics of case study point to the lack of generalisability of its findings. However, generalisability is rarely the aim of a researcher using this approach and, indeed, some argue that multiple case studies can provide generalisable findings (Stake, 2005; Yin, 2003).

Another common criticism of case study is that the data are not open to cross checking, which poses the risk that conclusions may be selective, biased, personal and subjective. In addition, given the multiple data sources involved, the data collection, processing and analysis can be considerably time consuming (Cohen et al., 2003).

Merriam (1998, p.41) argues, however, that the strengths of case study research outweigh its limitations stating that:

The case study offers a means of investigating complex social units consisting of multiple variables of potential importance in understanding the phenomenon. Anchored in real-life situations, the case study results in a rich and holistic account of a phenomenon. It offers insights and illuminates meanings that expand its readers' experiences. These insights can be construed as tentative hypotheses that help structure further research; hence case study plays an important role in advancing a field's knowledge base.

Case study research is a holistic way of capturing the real world as experienced, given all of its complexities, in a naturalistic way. It is a way of capturing the meanings that people attach to their experience which can eventually provide insights into other, similar situations and cases. The data obtained from case study research can also be presented in a more publicly accessible form than some other kinds of research report. (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003; Cohen et al., 2003; Merriam, 1998).

A case study approach was adopted for the research described in this thesis as I was interested in examining and understanding the various elements which contribute to the wider picture of the classroom and to children's self-esteem. I was also interested in examining the links between the different elements which contribute to the development of self-esteem which had been emphasised in the literature. In this way the case studies enabled me to answer the first two of my research questions. The goal was that through careful examination of the situation I would be able to explore and illuminate the complexities underpinning that situation in order to put together the various aspects involved to form a coherent picture and further my knowledge of the phenomenon (Bogden & Bilken, 1982, as cited in Wellington, 2004; Greig & Taylor, 1999; Stake, 2005). I chose to undertake two instrumental case studies because multiple case studies have been referred to as having greater analytical benefits, as being more compelling and more robust (Yin, 2003). Stake (2005) suggests that researchers undertake multiple case studies 'because it is believed that understanding them will lead to better

understanding and perhaps better theorizing about a still larger collection of cases' (p.446). As a means to answer my third research question ('what influence, if any, do certain PSCE practices have on children's self-esteem') an intervention was instigated to provide data which would allow me to explore and illuminate this area and which would provide a means to understand the classroom practices impacting upon children's self-esteem. Some would describe an intervention as a key feature of Action Research. This aspect of the research design is discussed below.

Intervention

Although there are many different descriptions and definitions of Action Research, there are some common elements which distinguish it (Cohen et al., 2000). The first of these is its purpose which is to influence or change some element of the focus of the research (Cohen et al., 2000; Robson, 2002). Wellington (2000) states that the key aim of Action Research is 'to bring about critical awareness, improvement and change in a practice, setting or system' (p.21). In this respect the intervention contained some elements of action research. The intention behind the implementation of the PSCE activities was to explore and illuminate the various possible factors having an influence on children's self-esteem in the classroom. The aim was also to investigate whether the activities could raise children's self-esteem and if they did to suggest how changes to the French curriculum might be beneficially made. However, the case studies as a whole took a broader focus than just the activities themselves. The aim of the interviews with the teachers, pupils and parents was to understand the various factors which influence children's self-esteem within the context of the classroom but also outside of the classroom. Likewise, the self-esteem questionnaires aimed to collect data on individual children's self-esteem in various contexts including those unrelated to the classroom.

Another key element of Action Research involves the process of research which is one of collaboration and participation in which the participants themselves are involved in the design and analysis of the research (Cohen et al., 2000; Robson, 2002). The research conducted in this study was not participatory as the teachers were not involved in the planning and analysis of the research. It can thus be concluded that although the research contained some elements of Action Research, these were not salient enough to situate the study within an Action Research framework.

SAMPLE SELECTION AND CHARACTERISTICS

In order to ensure anonymity for all participants, pseudonyms have been used for schools and all participants.

Schools

Four classes from four different primary schools in different areas in the East of France were selected for the purposes of this study. Two in-depth instrumental case studies took place in two of these classrooms (Ecole du Centre and Ecole des Vergers). The two classes in the other schools (Ecole Prévert & Ecole Beaulieu) served as control classes. (See Table 3.1 for details of the sample sizes).

Case study schools

Ecole du Centre and Ecole des Vergers were selected because each had on its staff a teacher interested in participating in this research project. They were willing to undertake various PSCE activities, said they would feel comfortable having me in the classroom and were prepared to make time available to talk to me over the period of one school year. In preparation for my research, a number of colleagues and professionals were considered and contacted. Several of the teachers were working with children who were too young to take place in the case study. Other teachers had moved on to management or teacher training positions. When the teachers from Ecole du Centre and from Ecole des Vergers responded enthusiastically to my proposal and informed me that they would be teaching children who fell within the required age group more information was provided to them explaining the research project and a meeting was arranged to discuss the various details of the project.

I met with the case study teachers together in June 2007 to discuss the aims and methods of my research. The teachers were both informed of the various data collection tools and procedures. The frequency of observations throughout the year was discussed and agreed upon. At the meeting, I presented a compilation of a range of PSCE practices selected from various sources (Clough & Holden, 2002; Denis et al., 2000; Mosley, 2005; Staquet, 2002) which would serve as a resource packet for the teachers. After discussing and considering the different types of PSCE practices together, the teachers each agreed to implement different

PSCE activities selected from the resource packet on a regular weekly basis. Authorisation from the two school inspectors responsible for the areas and from the head teacher in Ecole des Vergers (the teacher in Ecole du Centre was also the head teacher of that school) was obtained prior to the start of the project (September 2007) (Appendix 1). Obtaining from parents and children is discussed later in this chapter.

Class Teacher characteristics

Mme Malavoy, age 29, had been working as a primary school teacher for 5 years. She had been the teaching head teacher at Ecole du Centre for 3 years at the start of the project. During the 2007-2008 school year she also prepared for and succeeded in passing the French competitive teacher trainer exam (CAFIPEMF), which qualified her to be a teacher trainer the following school year (2008-2009).

The class teacher at Ecole des Vergers, Mme Normand, age 40, had been teaching in primary schools for 16 years at the start of the project and had been a teacher trainer for five years. She had previously taught for 3 years in two different schools for children with special needs and had been teaching at Ecole des Vergers for the remaining 13 years. As a teacher trainer she had conducted seminars on the area of citizenship at the university teacher training institute (IUFM).

Control schools

Two control groups (Ecole Prévert & Ecole Beaulieu) containing children of the same age and of similar backgrounds to those in the case study classrooms were identified. It was important, if differences in the levels of esteem were identified over the year in the case study classes of Ecole du Centre and Ecole des Vergers to know if these were due to the normal process of maturation. Wellington (2004) defines a control group as ‘a group of people in an experiment who do not experience the treatment given to an experimental group’ and states that the purpose of a control group is ‘to show what would have happened to the experimental group if it had not been exposed to the experimental treatment’ (p.195). Thus in the two control groups, the class teachers were not known to be implementing regular PSCE activities. No observations were undertaken in these classes, however, which meant that the exact practices taking place in these classrooms could not be documented. In this context, Cohen et al. (2003) warn against drawing too narrow conclusions from this type of quasi-experimental

design due to the numerous possibilities of extraneous variables, such as teaching style, curriculum materials and ‘the thousand and one other events that occurred in and about the school during the terms work’ (p.213) and emphasise the need to consider all of the possible influences on the results when analysing the data.

Pupil characteristics

The children from Ecole du Centre and Ecole Beaulieu (Table 3.1) came from predominantly white middle-class backgrounds. The children from Ecole des Vergers and Ecole Prévert (Table 3.1) also came from predominantly white backgrounds. However, due to the fact that Ecole des Vergers and Ecole Prévert contained various low-income housing areas, the socio-economic status of the children from these schools ranged from low to medium. The participants’ ages ranged between 7 and 11 years. This particular age group was chosen as research has shown the period of middle to late childhood (approximately ages 8 to 11) as a period in which cognitive abilities allow children to evaluate themselves based on their comparisons with an ‘ideal self’ as well as on social comparisons (Harter, 1999, p.50). This is also a time when children begin to strongly internalise the opinion of others, especially with regards to academic competence (Humphrey, 2004). Moreover, it was hoped that questions asked during interviews and in discussions would be readily understood by this age group due to their increased meta-cognitive awareness. The decision to use a mixed age group for the sample was determined by the choice of the teachers. Given that these teachers were enthusiastic about participating in the study and that the children in their classes fell within the range of middle childhood, a mixed age group was considered appropriate for the needs of the study.

Focus Children

Six children were selected from each of the two case study classes to form a focus group comprising two low, two medium and two high self-esteem children. The level of self-esteem was determined through the use of a self-report self-esteem questionnaire (BSS). Each child was assigned a score indicating a low, medium or high self-esteem range. The results of the questionnaire were triangulated with the class teacher’s assessment of the child’s self-esteem based on the child’s behaviour in the classroom after which the focus groups were established.

Table 3.1 : Sample sizes

School	Number of children in class	Number of focus children in each class	Number of class teachers interviewed	Number of parents Interviewed
Ecole du Centre	17	6	1	6
Ecole des Vergers	23	6	1	9
Ecole Prévert	24	0	0	0
Ecole Beaulieu	23	0	0	0

Intervention: Implementation of Personal, Social and Citizenship Education Teaching Practices

This study aimed to examine certain practices linked to personal, social and citizenship education (PSCE) and the influence these practices may have on children's self-esteem. The practices implemented during the school year were chosen in collaboration with the class teachers and revolved around several areas of PSCE. In addition to the continuation of the teachers' current practices linked to PSCE it was agreed that the teachers would implement one new activity per week chosen from a list of various PSCE activities with which I had provided them (Appendix 3). The activities were selected using criteria described in the literature as positively influencing children's self-esteem (Denis et al., 2000; Lawrence, 2005 ; Mosley, 2005 ; Plummer, 2004 ; Plummer, 2007; Staquet, 2002). These included activities whose aim was to promote:

- self-knowledge and knowledge of others in the classroom
- learning about feelings and how to express feelings
- trust building
- feeling positive about oneself
- risk-taking
- self-acceptance and self-reliance
- co-operation and conflict resolution

These activities were scheduled in the class timetable. Mme Malavoy scheduled two thirty minute sessions per week (Tuesday and Thursday afternoons) into the timetable for PSCE

activities and Mme Normand scheduled one 30-40 minute session once a week on Tuesday morning before break time in addition to her regular hour-long class council session every Friday afternoon. Mme Malavoy chose to schedule shorter sessions twice a week as she felt that this would be more manageable with regards to time constraints. As the year progressed, the second weekly session was often devoted to 'philosophy for children' sessions. Mme Normand chose to conduct a longer session but limited this to once a week due to scheduling difficulties. She was unable to schedule another special PSCE session during the week as she was only in the classroom two full days and three half days due to her position as teacher trainer. In addition to this, certain afternoons were taken up by other compulsory sessions such as swimming or skiing and one hour every Friday afternoon was dedicated to the class council session. The PSCE sessions were also scheduled on the days and times I was able to observe each of the classrooms. Although these differences in the way in which the activities were implemented was not ideal in terms of research design, it was important to allow the teachers a certain degree of flexibility and freedom with regards to the scheduling and implementation of the activities in order for them to feel at ease and free from undue pressure or expectations. It was therefore necessary to accept what was possible within each classroom. The goal was to understand the processes occurring within the classrooms and not to generalise from the data.

The PSCE activities from the resource pack which the teachers agreed to implement on a weekly basis (Appendix 3) revolved around several areas linked to PSCE and self-esteem. The various sources included literature on: co-operative games and conflict resolution (Denis et al., 2000), self-esteem enhancement in the classroom (Lawrence, 2005; Plummer, 2007), Circle Time (Mosley, 2005), establishing positive classroom ethos (Staquet, 2002), and philosophy for children (Labé & Puech, 2003) (Table 3.2). The activities selected for implementation (Table 3.3) fell into the following categories: self-knowledge and knowledge of others in the classroom, learning about feelings and how to express feelings (self-expression & listening to others' verbal and non-verbal language), trust, positive feedback, and risk-taking activities (Plummer, 2004; Lawrence, 1996; Staquet, 2002), self-acceptance and self-reliance activities, and activities which promoted co-operation and conflict resolution (Plummer, 2007; Denis et al., 2000).

Some examples of activities which promoted self-knowledge and knowledge of others included having the students make a personal flag, or coat of arms which represented

themselves (Clough & Holden, 2002; Denis et al., 2000; Staquet, 2002) the use of games within circle time such as ‘tossing the ball games’ in which children name something interesting about themselves such as their favourite dessert or animal (Denis et al., 2000), activities such as ‘what’s in my bag’ in which pupils’ select meaningful objects to put in a bag or box which represent themselves (Canfield & Wells, 1996) or ‘moving circles’ in which children briefly discuss a topic in pairs before moving on to form another pair (Denis et al., 2000, Staquet, 2002).

‘Expression of feelings’ activities aimed to enable children to identify their feelings and express them without the fear of rejection or judgement. Activities included completing ‘feeling inventories’ which could be shared or kept private, the use of circle time for the discussion of feelings or illustrating or writing about a particular time that elicited certain feelings (Lawrence, 2005; Plummer, 2004; Canfield & Wells, 1996). Included as well in the expression of feelings is the practice of encouraging others and giving positive feedback. This can be implemented through activities such as ‘positive postings’ (Lawrence, 2005) or ‘Warm Fuzzies’ (Denis et al., 2000; Staquet, 2002) during which all pupils are encouraged to write positive comments about their classmates.

Some of the trust building activities included: ‘leading the blind’ (one child is blindfolded and the other leads him/her around the room or the school), ‘the dizzy bottle’ (children work in pairs with one child falling back and the other catching him/her) or ‘tangles’ (in groups of 8, children stand in a circle, close their eyes and take the hands of two different pupils in the circle after which they must untangle themselves back into a circle.) These activities are then followed up by a general plenary session in which the children are encouraged to express their own feelings regarding the activities as well as their ideas on basic principle principles of trust (Denis et al., 2000; Lawrence, 1996).

Each teacher was free to choose which activities they wished to implement from the packet. The specific activities chosen during the year at Ecole du Centre and Ecole des Vergers are listed in Table 3.3. Mme Normand implemented the above PSCE activities from the resource packet weekly. In general each activity was introduced, implemented and repeated over the course of two or three PSCE sessions. This explains the smaller number of activities found in the table. The teacher’s choice of activities differed essentially for reasons related to the physical space available to the teachers and to the age of the children in their classes. Mme

Malavoy was able to use a large multi-purpose activity room located close to her classroom which allowed for a relatively large amount of movement and noise whereas Mme Normand used the large corridor located next to her own and another teacher’s classroom. Given the openness of the location and the small amount of space it provided, the children were required to conduct themselves in a fairly restricted and quiet manner which possibly influenced the choice of activities. Mme Normand’s choice to repeat the activities several times or to introduce them in separate stages was also linked to the age of the children whom she felt needed more time to understand and assimilate the activities.

Table 3.2: Types of PSCE activities suggested and their sources

Category/area of PSCE	Example activities	Sources
Self-knowledge & knowledge of others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal flag, coat of arms, totem pole. • Tossing the ball games, ‘what’s in my bag’ • Moving circles & ‘we both like...’ 	Clough & Holden, 2002 Canfield & Wells, 1996 Denis et al., 2000 Mosley, 2005 Staquet, C., 2002
Feelings- learning about feelings and how to express feelings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moving circles • Circle time • ‘Today I feel...’ • Class Council 	Staquet, 2002 Mosley, 2005 Lawrence, 2006 Denis et al., 2000
Building trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leading the blind • The dizzy bottle • Tangles • Mirror talking • Statues • Comfortable Coco 	Lawrence, 2006 Lawrence, 2006 Denis et al., 2000 Mosley, 2005 Plummer, 2007 Denis et al., 2000 Denis et al., 2000
Self-acceptance and Self-reliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class council • Warm fuzzies • Pass the shell • Personal Flag 	Denis et al., 2000 Staquet, 2002 Plummer, 2007 Clough & Holden, 2002
Positive feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warm fuzzies • Pass the shell 	Staquet, 2000 Plummer, 2007
Co-operation & Conflict resolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Musical balance • The two donkeys • Back to back • Tangles • Draw a conflict • Hands and feet 	Plummer, 2007 Mosley, 2005 Denis et al., 2000 Plummer, 2007 Denis et al., 2000

Table 3.3: Resource pack activities implemented in the case study schools

	Ecole du Centre (Mme Malavoy)	Ecole des Vergers (Mme Normand)
Personal flag/Coat of Arms	√	√
Back to back	√	√
Warm Fuzzies	√	√
Draw a conflict	√	√
Mirror talking	√	√
The two donkeys	√	√
Tangles	√	
Body building/forms and letters	√	
The dizzy bottle/catching the blindfolded	√	
Leading the blind	√	
Tossing the ball	√	
Musical balance/musical chair	√	
Blind sculptors	√	
Silent greetings	√	
Moving Circles	√	
Hands and feet	√	
Comfortable Coco		√
Knock, knock		√
Statues		√

DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Case study allows the researcher to present what Holliday calls ‘thick description’ (Holliday, 2002). ‘To arrive at thick description ...the researcher will need to consider the many facets which make up its full social complexity...Data must therefore be collected to reveal all of these aspects. Indeed this is the purpose of data collection’ (Holliday, 2002, p. 79). In order to collect data which would lead to ‘thick description’ and which would allow various aspects of the children and the classroom to be illuminated, the study used a mixture of quantitative and qualitative data collection tools.

Self-esteem Questionnaire

A self-esteem questionnaire was administered at the beginning and end of the school year in both classes in which the case studies took place as well as in two similar classes which served as control groups.

Questionnaire pilots

Several self-esteem questionnaires were piloted before selection of the final questionnaire to be used. The questionnaires piloted were selected from a number of self-esteem questionnaires which had previously been piloted with young children of the same age as the participants in the study and which had been published and recognised by the research community.

The following questionnaires were piloted in four French primary school classes: The Q.A.E.V.S (Maintier & Alaphilippe, 2006), the French version of the Harter Self-Perception Profile for Children (Boivin, Vitaro & Gagnon, 1992) and the Burnett Self-Scale (Burnett, 1996). The pilots revealed various difficulties within the questionnaires essentially linked to children’s comprehension of the questions. Below are summarised each pilot and the results.

Pilot 1: The Harter Self-Perception Profile for Children

A French version of the Harter Self-Perception Profile for Children (Appendix 4) was chosen to be piloted as it was the most widely used instrument in measuring self-esteem at the time and it had been previously translated into French and piloted on a range of children. The questionnaire was reduced to 24 questions instead of the original 36. It was then piloted on a class of 13 seven to ten year old children in a primary school in the east of France.

As suggested by Burden (1999) the format of the Harter questionnaire proved to be confusing to the children. Most of the children did not understand how to answer the questions. Despite the lengthy explanations and illustrations given in order to render the format as clear as possible, some of the children continued to tick several boxes in answer to the same question while others had difficulties understanding the meaning of certain questions. Many of the children had crossed out or erased answers in several places which led me to feel the children were confused by or unsure of the questions. Some children had problems understanding some of the vocabulary, for example, the English word 'popular' was translated in to French as 'populaire' (Canadian French) which many of the children did not understand.

Pilot 2: Q.A.E.V.S.

The Q.A.E.V.S. (Questionnaire d'Auto-Evaluation de Soi) designed by Maintier and Alaphilippe (2006) (Appendix 5), designed by a group of French researchers and written originally in French, is based on the Harter Self-Perception Profile for Children but in a more direct and shortened form. The questionnaire contains nine items each concerning a different domain of self-esteem (physical attractiveness, athletic ability, academic ability, social acceptance and behavioural conduct.) and nine questions on the importance attributed to the domain by the child ('Is intelligence important to you?' 'not important at all', 'not very important', 'somewhat important', 'fairly important', 'very important'). This questionnaire was piloted on a class of 19 eight to eleven year old children in a primary school in the east of France.

The children in this pilot had fairly strong reactions to some of the terms used on the questionnaire. It appeared they had difficulties relating to such abstract concepts as 'beauty' and 'intelligence'. The other difficulty they had was with the way the question asked them to compare themselves to other children of their age ('With regards to intelligence, compared to other children your age, do you think you are –much less intelligent than others, less intelligent than others, as intelligent as others, more intelligent than others, much more intelligent than others'). Many of the children were afraid the other children in the class would read their responses. Some were confused by the term 'moyennement' (meaning 'somewhat important').

Pilot 3: The Burnett Self-Scale

The Burnett Self-Scale (BSS) is also based on domain specific aspects of self-esteem. Based on the work of Marsh, it consists of eight subscales which measure beliefs about specific aspects of the self as well as a more general global self-esteem subscale.

The 40 item questionnaire was shortened to 22 items as many of the questions were repetitive and with the goal of facilitating the task for the children. Three questions, taken from the Lawrence Self-Esteem Questionnaire (LAWSEQ) were added to this simplified version as they dealt specifically with children's feelings of self-esteem and were suggested as a useful addition to the BSS in the literature (Burden, 1999). The simplified version was translated into French and was read and examined by several experts in the field of education and psychology whose mother tongue was French. Following the suggestions of the aforementioned, minor changes in the wording and vocabulary in French were made before piloting the questionnaire with a class of 23 eight to eleven year old children. The children completed the questionnaire with ease. A few children asked for confirmation of the word 'physiquement' and a few of them mentioned that they found the questions a bit repetitive.

Choice of Questionnaire and Final Amendments

As a result of piloting the Harter Self-Perception Profile, the Maintier Questionnaire d'Auto-Evaluation de Soi and the Burnett Self Scale as discussed above, the Burnett Self Scale was chosen as it seemed most appropriate and best understood by the children. The amendments made to the questionnaire before administration in the case study classrooms are discussed below.

Although the French children in the pilot study did not demonstrate difficulties understanding the BSS questionnaire they did make several suggestions on words they thought would be more appropriate for the questionnaire. They suggested that Q.6 'Je me sens très bien physiquement' would be better understood if rephrased 'Je me sens très bien dans ma peau'. Another child pointed out that for Q.24 'Mes parents aiment toujours entendre mes idées' (My parents like to hear about my ideas) there should be a separate question for the mother and father's behaviour. This led to an additional question which allowed differentiation between the mother and the father. Another child suggested adding a feminine ending to all of the adjectives (for example, Q.7 'Je suis beau' should read 'Je suis beau/belle' and Q.8 'je suis bon en sport' should provide two endings 'je suis bon(ne) en sport'. Questions 7, 8, 10 11, 12,

16, and 18 were adapted to be suitable for both male and female respondents (Final version of questionnaire Appendix 6 and Appendix 7).

Administration of Questionnaire

I administered the questionnaires in each class at the start of the school year 2007. Prior to its administration, the purpose of the questionnaire was explained and the anonymous and confidential nature of the questionnaires was emphasised. The fact that there were no right or wrong answers was stressed and an example question was read out loud. The children were also informed that there was no time limit and that they were not obligated to answer any of the questions they did not wish to. All of the children in each class were present on the day the questionnaire was administered.

Scoring the questionnaires

The questionnaires were scored using the system indicated on the BSS scoring sheet. Each item was given a score from 1 to 5 (1 being the most negative and 5 being the most positive). The scores were determined on a cumulative basis and arranged according to subscales. The children were grouped according to their score on the global self-esteem subscale. In selecting the high self-esteem and low self-esteem focus children, the children with the highest or lowest scores in the area of global self-esteem in each class were chosen. One child in Ecole de Vergers who scored highly on the global self-esteem measure had had a history of behaviour problems and the teacher suspected her of not answering in a completely honest way. This child was, therefore, not considered when the selection of the high self-esteem focus children was undertaken. The children who had the most scores in the medium range (between 2 & 4 on the 1-5 scale) were selected to be the medium self-esteem focus children. The data from the questionnaire were also triangulated with the teachers' comments and perception of each child to form the final group of focus children.

Control groups

The questionnaire was also administered to two classes in schools in similar areas of France. These had the same profiles (age, socio-economic status) as the case study classes. As explained earlier in this chapter, it was felt important to incorporate control groups into the

study in order to be able to measure whether changes, if any, in self-esteem levels of children in the case study classes were due only to maturation over the course of a school year.

Interviews

Kvale (2007) refers to the interview as ‘a uniquely sensitive and powerful method for capturing the experiences and lived meanings of the subjects’ everyday world’ (p. 11). Through interviewing the researcher seeks to understand the meaning of central themes from the participants’ perspectives. Wellington (2004) emphasises the important role that interviews play in case study research stressing that ‘discussion with people at all possible levels’ allows a clear picture to be built up of the case (p. 94). They also allow the participant and interviewer to clarify meanings together. As each individual is unique and therefore attributes their own particular meaning to certain statements or questions, it is important to clarify and ‘negotiate’ these meanings together. Another important function of interviews is that they provide a useful complement to surveys/questionnaires, allowing the researcher the possibility to probe meanings and the participant to elaborate on his/her thoughts (Pring, 2004; Wellington, 2004). In addition, interviews provide the participants with the possibility to ‘speak for themselves’ and to tell their own ‘story’ allowing the participants the opportunity to make their perspectives known and, in this way, empowering them (Pring, 2004; Wellington, 2004).

Types of Interview

Researchers may use different types of interviews in a study depending on the nature of the study itself and the outcome desired. Fontana & Frey (2005) stress that researchers ‘must be aware of the implications, pitfalls and problems of the types of interview they choose’ (p.722). Structured interviews, which follow a set order of questions from which the researcher does not deviate, provide a maximum amount of control (Fontana & Frey, 2005; Cohen et al., 2003). The interviewer’s objective is not to probe for further meaning or to explore unexpected issues which arise but rather to use the interview as a ‘face-to-face questionnaire’ (Wellington, 2004, p.74). The advantage of this type of interview is the highly structured format which allows for easy analysis of the data (Arksey & Knight, 2002 cited in Fontana & Frey, 2005). At the other end of the spectrum, unstructured research follows the model adopted in psychoanalysis in which the interviewee is encouraged to express their thoughts as they arise. There is no set list of questions and the interviewer does not direct the

interview in one direction or another. (Gillham, 2005; Wellington, 2004) This type of interview yields large amounts of qualitative data with minimum interference on the part of the interviewer which lends itself to high quality narrative but can be long and difficult to analyse (Bell, 2005; Gillham, 2005). The semi-structured interview is situated in between these two approaches. It relies on some form of interview schedule or checklist yet the researcher is allowed a certain amount of flexibility with regards to the wording of and order of the questions (Gillham, 2005; Wellington, 2004). Due to the basic structure of this type of interview, the data collected lends itself to a more simplified analysis than unstructured interviews (Bell, 2005; Gillham, 2005).

With interviewing there is a risk of bias and subjectivity on the part of the interviewer (Cohen et al., 2003). Due to the researcher's presence, the risk of bias also exists with regards to the person being interviewed (Creswell, 2003). Fontana and Frey (2005) go so far as to say that 'neutrality is not possible' at all and that when interviewing 'taking a stance becomes unavoidable' (p.696). Being aware of and recognising these risks as a researcher influenced the approach to designing the semi-structured interview schedules so as to avoid leading, restrictive and 'loaded' questions (Wellington, 2004, p.82) and to the way in which the interviews were conducted. Special attention was paid to researcher or participant bias through what Kvale (2007, p.237) refers to as 'careful questioning' and 'continual checking' of the information in order to verify the meaning of what was said.

Interviews may be conducted either individually or in groups. In group interviews, the participants, especially children, may feel safer and more at ease. Group interviews help the participants to relax and also to 'jog each others' memories and thoughts' (Wellington, 2004, p.81) There is the risk, however, that one individual dominates the group, and that some participants may feel intimidated by another member of the group. Sometimes the researcher has difficulties following up an individual's line of thought in a group situation (Lindsay, 2000; Fontana & Frey, 2005; Wellington, 2004). Group interviews are not always appropriate when discussing highly sensitive and personal issues with the participants.

Interviewees

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with each case study teacher, with the focus children and with their parents/step-parents at various times throughout the school year, as described in detail below. I chose to conduct semi-structured interviews in order to build up a

greater understanding of those being interviewed and their points of view. Semi-structured interviews provided the structure to explore the various areas of the research questions and allowed further probing into the deeper meanings of what they had said, while providing the participants with the opportunity to express themselves fully.

Semi-structured individual interviews were conducted with the focus children in each class at the beginning and end of the school year. Individual interviews provided a means for follow-up on the self-esteem questionnaires as well as follow-up on the various personal, social and citizenship activities which were implemented. Due to the sensitive and private nature of the self-esteem questionnaire, each child was interviewed individually.

Focus group interviews were also undertaken with the focus children in the middle of the second trimester as these interviews focussed on the PSCE activities rather than on the individual child. It was thought that group interviews would stimulate conversation and would help the children to feel comfortable and at ease to discuss the various PSCE activities freely.

The parent interviews were conducted individually as they also focussed in part on each focus child and therefore contained personal and sensitive data.

Teacher Interviews

Three sets of semi-structured interviews were conducted with the two class teachers individually. These were conducted at the beginning of the school year, in the middle of the second trimester and at the end of the school year. The main difficulty was in scheduling with the teachers a sufficient block of time for the interview. Both teachers interviewed had very busy schedules and could not allocate more than one hour for the purpose of the interview. With Mme Normand the autumn term interview was conducted on two different days. With Mme Malavoy the mid-term interview was conducted on two separate days. The interview schedule design was successful in that it guided the participant through the various areas of the research questions while leaving enough freedom for the teachers to give rich details and discuss the meaning of different events in the classroom. The rapport established was friendly and empathetic but also professional.

Interview 1

A semi-structured interview schedule (Appendix 8 & Appendix 9) was used for the first set of teacher interviews. The interview schedule was devised according to my initial research

questions and addressed the areas of: the development of self-esteem in children at home and in the classroom, the link between responsibility and self-esteem, classroom practices thought to influence self-esteem, and the teacher's perception of the focus children. The interview took place in a private room at the school with the class teacher in Ecole du Centre and at the home of the teacher of Ecole des Vergers at the teachers' requests as this was the most convenient place for them. The interviews were recorded in their entirety with the permission of the teachers. Both interviews lasted approximately two hours.

Interview 2

The second set of semi-structured interviews (Appendix 10 & 11) took place in the middle of the second trimester. The aim was to discuss the implementation of the various PSCE practices and the teachers' evaluation of them, to discuss any progress made by the focus children and to explore further various themes which had emerged during the first set of interviews. These interviews took place at the teachers' respective schools.

Interview 3

The final interviews (Appendix 12 & Appendix 13) took place in June in the last week of summer term. This interview was a means of discussing each focus child in detail and his/her progress and development over the school year. It also explored the teachers' perspectives on the role and influence of PSCE practices on children's behaviour toward each other in the classroom and on children's individual behaviour and progress. This final interview was also an occasion to revisit the concepts of self-esteem and to discuss whether any changes in the way teachers viewed the development of self-esteem in the classroom had occurred as a result of their involvement in the project.

Interviews with the focus children

Interview 1

The interviews conducted at the beginning of the school year with the focus children were based on their answers to the BSS questionnaire (Appendix 6 & Appendix 7). In order to maintain a manageable amount of time for each interview- long enough for the children to feel free to express their thoughts but not so long they would tire and lose willingness to answer freely and openly- nine of the 26 questions on the questionnaire were selected for further exploration. Of the nine questions, seven related directly to self-esteem, one related to

peer relations and one related to learning. The questions directly related to self-esteem also included discussion of the child's physical appearance.

The individual interviews took place during lesson time in a separate room. I began each interview with a brief reminder of the purpose of the project after which the child was invited to ask any questions he or she might have. Each child was asked for permission to record the interviews via a small digital recorder to which all of the children agreed. Contrary to Graue and Walsh (1998) the children did not seem to be affected by the fact that the interview was being recorded. Perhaps this was also due to the form of the digital recorder which resembled a mobile phone, an item familiar to them. The interviews ranged from 20 to 40 minutes. On one occasion the interview was interrupted to allow the child being interviewed to participate in recess time and was resumed following the break. This was in accordance with the researcher's wish that the children who participated in the project would not be disadvantaged in any way.

Interview 2: Mid-year focus group interviews

The focus group interviews were conducted in February 2008 and took place in a separate room during lesson time and lasted an average of twenty minutes per group. The focus children were interviewed in groups of three according to the relationships they held with each other. This was due to the fact that there had previously been some relationship problems between some of the focus children and that the objective of conducting focus group interviews was for the children to feel as much at ease as possible. The interview schedule (Appendix 14 & Appendix 15) was based on questions whose aim was to explore the focus children's perceptions of the PSCE activities. As the literature had warned, each group contained one or two children who tended to dominate the conversation (Dockrell et al., 2000; Fontana & Frey, 2005; Wellington, 2004). This was managed by carefully redirecting the questions to the other children in the group and by specifically intervening to make the other children aware that a particular child wished to express their opinion. On the whole this was a successful technique and each of the children was able to express their opinions.

Interview 3

The final interviews with the focus children (Appendix 16 & Appendix 17) took place in June in the last week of summer term. The children were interviewed individually in a separate room. The interviews were recorded after having requested permission from the children and lasted from 25 to 50 minutes. The first part of the interview focussed on the individual focus

children's perceptions of the PSCE activities implemented during the year. The second half of the interview explored the differences between the focus children's scores on the pre and post self-esteem questionnaires.

Parent Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the parents/step-parents of the twelve focus children from the two case study schools in the first trimester of the 2007-2008 school year. The aim was to elicit the parents' views of the child's classroom environment and practices to obtain a deeper understanding of the influence this context had on the children's levels of self-esteem. The semi-structured interview schedule for the parent interviews (Appendix 18 & Appendix 19) was closely aligned to the research questions and addressed the themes of self-esteem and responsibility and the development of these in the classroom and in the home. Parents were asked to explain whether they felt it was a teacher's role to contribute to the development of their child's self-esteem and responsibility and whether they had noticed any practices which had enhanced their child's self-esteem or helped their child become more responsible. Parents were also asked to describe their perception of their child with regard to their self-esteem and needs in the domain of self-esteem, their attitudes to school, their talents and strengths and their social and emotional development.

As some of the concepts addressed were complex, and it was important to use terminology understood by all of the parents, the interview schedule was piloted with one parent from a different school whose child was in the same age group and who had a similar background as the focus children. It was hoped that through the pilot, the researcher would gain an awareness of whether the questions would be easily understood by the parents. The term 'self-esteem' was explained prior to the interview questions and time was allowed to discuss individual understanding of the concept as well as any clarification necessary. Two questions from the pilot interview schedule proved slightly difficult to answer: the second half of Q.2 'Do you think teachers have a role in developing self-esteem in their pupils? How might teachers do this in the classroom? ; and the last question 'What do you think are the particular needs for your child this year in terms of developing his/her self-esteem?'. These were quite complex questions which required reflection and careful consideration before a response was given. The decision was made to leave these two questions in the interview schedule but to be aware that they might prove difficult for some of the parents. In such cases, examples would be provided as a means of helping the parent in his/her reflection. For example, with regards to

the questions mentioned above various probes were devised in advance. In general the probes used the structure ‘some people think...’, ‘some people say that...’ or ‘some children need...’ to stimulate thought on the question. For example, if a parent had difficulties answering question 2 ‘How might teachers contribute to the development of develop their students’ self-esteem?’ the prompt ‘Some people think that when teachers encourage their students in class this has a positive influence on children’s self-esteem. Others feel that giving them personalised attention contributes to positive self-esteem’ could be used. Although these types of probes involved the risk of being ‘leading’, the object was to provide examples which would stimulate thought and allow the participant to agree or to disagree. In reality these probes were only needed once and the parent in question did not agree with the example given in the probe.

The parents of the twelve focus children were contacted by telephone and asked if they would be willing to be interviewed. All of the parents agreed. The interviews took place during the months of November and December 2007 at the parents’ convenience. It was important to me that the interviews take place in the most comfortable and convenient place for the parents. Of the parents from school A, four of the interviews were conducted in the parents’ homes and two were conducted at the school at the request of the parents. All of the interviews of the parents from Ecole du Centre were conducted in their homes at their request. A total of six parents from Ecole du Centre: five mothers and one father, were interviewed. For Ecole des Vergers, a total of nine parents, two mothers, one father, and three sets of parents (mother and father together), one of which consisted of the focus child’s father and his stepmother, were interviewed (Table 3.4). The interviews were also an occasion to explain the project in detail and to answer any of the questions the parents had. The interviews were recorded via a digital recorder after having requested permission to do so.

Table 3.4 : Parent interview details

School of focus children	Interview with mother alone	Interview with father alone	Interview with both father and mother/step-mother
Ecole du Centre	5	1	0
Ecole des Vergers	2	1	3

The interviews with the parents were highly successful. Most of the parents were interested in the project and were willing to discuss the various aspects of the research (responsibility at

home and in the classroom, the development of self-esteem and teacher practices) in detail. Parents had many things to share concerning their child's behaviour at home and at school and concerning their child's responsibilities at home. The interviews were deemed so highly informative and revealing that it would have been beneficial to the study to interview the parents a second time in order to check meanings and probe for deeper understandings in a more hermeneutical fashion. This, however, was not possible given the time involved in the other forms of data collection.

Observations

One of the foundational methods of data collection in case study research is observation (Stake, 1995; Cohen et al., 2003). As Cohen et al. state: 'whatever the problem or the approach, at the heart of every case study lies a method of observation.' (2003, p.185). Observation allows the researcher to capture and record events and interactions as they happen in a natural environment. It can be a means of building up a complete picture of the case by enriching and supplementing other sources of data collection. The flexibility involved in observation also allows the researcher to explore a variety of types of research questions (Cohen et al., 2003; Simpson & Tuson, 2003).

The main weaknesses involved in the method of observation are its 'high demand on time, effort and resources' and the susceptibility to bias (Simpson & Tuson, 2003, p.18). These can be dealt with in several ways. Simpson and Tuson (2003) suggest piloting the observation schedules prior to the actual study in order to estimate the resources necessary and to plan accordingly. They also suggest checking the observation notes or schedules with a third party, such as the classroom teacher, in an open, exploratory way to provide verification of the observations recorded. It is for this reason that these two techniques were included in the study and are reported below.

The role of the researcher

The choice was made in this study to conduct non-participant observation. This is defined as a position in which the researcher does not take on any group membership but instead 'stands aloof' from the group and keeps a certain distance from it. (Cohen et al., 2003). Participant observation, in which the researcher actually engages in the situation and context he or she is observing was briefly considered at the start of the study but was rejected for several reasons.

First of all, I did not have any prior relationship with the case study schools so becoming a participant observer was not a realistic option. Secondly, I wished to conduct systematic and detailed observations. This would have proved difficult had I been actively engaged in the classroom activities.

Observation tools

The literature on self esteem has identified the principal tools for measuring self-esteem as: 1) the use of a self-reporting self-esteem questionnaire such as the BSS and 2) direct observation of student behaviour (Burden, 1999; Burnett, 1998; Lawrence, 2006). In order to supplement and complement the self-esteem data collected through the questionnaire, to build an overall picture of each of the focus children and to understand fully their lived experience in the classroom, it was important to undertake classroom observations. In order to get a full a picture of the children in this context, I observed them not only during the PSCE lessons but during regular class lessons as well. Events and behaviour in the classroom were recorded using three different observation schedules.

- a participation schedule/tally sheet (Simpson & Tuson, 2003; Wragg, 1999) (Appendix 20 and Appendix 21),
- a time sampling schedule (Sharman, Cross & Vennis, 2006) (Appendix 22 & Appendix 23) and
- a narrative description schedule (Appendix 24 & Appendix 25) to record classroom events in a systematic way.

A research journal was also used to note observations and critical events that took place in the classroom and to record the systematic research conversations held with the two class teachers following each observation.

Observation Schedule of Class Participation

As a means of selecting elements or categories of behaviour (Wragg, 1999) to be observed in the classroom, the writer focussed on the Behavioural Indicators Scale (Burnett, 1998), the Behaviour Rating Form (Coopersmith, 1967) and the Behavioural Checklist indicated by Lawrence (2006). What stands out on these measures is the suggestion that children with low self-esteem will hesitate to participate, express opinions, fail to contribute or contribute in a 'subdued' way. The low self-esteem child will also ask for frequent support and reassurance

from teacher and peers. Another aspect which indicates evidence of low self-esteem is bragging and bullying. In contrast, high self-esteem children will show confidence in their work and will show self-respect and assurance (Lawrence, 2006).

The theme of participation was chosen as the focus of the observation schedule as it appeared to be a central aspect of high or low self-esteem. The self-esteem behavioural measures provided the following types of behaviour to observe and record: raises hand, gives limited response, contributes ideas, gives cautious subdued response, offers no response. It was thought that systematically observing the focus children in respect of these activities would help to build a more complete picture of each focus child .

PSCE Time Sampling and Narrative Description Schedules

Two different observation schedules were selected for this purpose: the Time Sampling Schedule (Sharman et al., 2006) and the Narrative Description Schedule (Sharman et al, 2006; Simpson & Tuson, 2003) With the Time Sampling Schedule each focus child was observed for a period of 3-5 minutes. During the observation of the focus child details of his/her behaviour or words spoken were recorded.

Sometimes it was more appropriate to record the events of the lesson in narrative fashion, for example during the Philosophy for Children or Class Council sessions where it was more important to record what was happening in the classroom as a whole. In these cases, the Narrative Description Schedule was used to record events chronologically as they happened. During certain PSCE activities statements made by the children and teacher were also recorded.

Observation Schedule Pilots

All the observation schedules were piloted in the summer term preceding the case studies in a convenience sample in one classroom of 9-11 year old boys in a different school in the same area as the case study schools and the control schools. The participation schedule (Appendix 26) was piloted during two separate lessons, Maths and Language, each lasting approximately 30 minutes. What emerged from this pilot was the need to define precisely what kind of answer would qualify as 'gives full answer' or 'gives limited or cautious response'. It was decided that any answer in which the child did not hesitate or express doubt in his/her answer (in the form of a question) would qualify as 'gives full answer' and that in contrast, 'gives

limited or cautious response' would be ticked any time the child hesitated or answered in a question-like manner.

Another decision to be made was whether to observe all of the focus children at one time or to observe each for a short period of time. Although noting the participation of all six focus children in the pilot proved challenging, near the end of the lesson this became easier and the decision was made to observe and note the participation of all of the focus children at the same time. It was also decided that in addition to the tick boxes, there should be space next to each focus child's column to note specific comments about each child's behaviour in relationship to his/her participation in order to illuminate the quantitative data gathered.

Three different narrative description schedules were tested to see which would be the most appropriate (Appendix 27, Appendix 28 & Appendix 29). The first two schedules provided a separate space for comments and observations on each focus child. It was thought that this type of schedule would serve as an aid in establishing regular observation of each focus child. The third narrative description schedule consisted of two columns, one to note the time and one to note observations (Simson & Tuson, 2003). The three schedules were piloted over two separate days during a PSCE lesson in the same classroom as the participation schedule pilot. It was concluded that the third schedule was the easiest and most straightforward way to observe the PSCE lesson and consequently was chosen for the main study.

Classroom Observations of Focus Children

Observations were conducted during the autumn and summer terms which led to a total of six half day observations in each classroom (Ecole du Centre & Ecole des Vergers) in term 1 and five half day observations in term 3. The observations took place every Tuesday morning in Ecole des Vergers and every Tuesday afternoon in Ecole du Centre as this was the day that both teachers were in their classrooms (e.g. not taking children to the library, swimming pool, computer room or sports hall) and one in which they had programmed their regular PSCE activities. The lessons observed were dependant on this schedule and remained consistent throughout the school year. In Ecole du Centre the lessons regularly observed were History/Geography, Science, Language Arts and PSCE. In Ecole des Vergers the lessons regularly observed were Literature, Grammar, Maths and PSCE. Further observations were conducted throughout the autumn and summer terms in order to observe other types of PSCE lessons such as the Philosophy for Children lessons and the Class Council lessons.

Table 3.5 : Research Tools

Research Tools	Date/period	Ecole du Centre	Ecole des Vergers	Ecole Prévert	Ecole Beaulieu
Self-esteem questionnaire	September 2007	√	√	√	√
	June 2008	√	√	√	√
Non- participant observation	Autumn term 2007	√	√		
	Summer term 2008	√	√		
Semi-structured interviews with focus children	September 2007	√	√		
	February 2008	√	√		
	June 2008	√	√		
Semi-structured interviews with class teachers	September 2007	√	√		
	February 2008	√	√		
	June 2008	√	√		
Semi-structured interviews with parents/carers	November/December 2007	√	√		

Triangulation

Triangulation provides validity, congruence and an overall holistic view of the phenomenon being studied (Denzin, 1994). It is especially relevant in case study research where the researcher aims to understand complex phenomena (Cohen et al., 2003). Denzin refers to four different types of triangulation: data, investigator, methodological and theory (1994). Data triangulation encompasses the use of ‘multiple data sources’ (Cowman, 1993, p.790) which can be split into three types: time, space and person (Cowman, 1993, Denzin, 1994). In this study, the classrooms from two different primary schools can be considered a form of person and space triangulation in that ‘it permits the researcher to discover which dimensions of phenomena are similar and which are dissimilar across settings ... and which differ by group membership’ (Mitchell, 1986, as cited in Cowman, 1993). The second type of triangulation employed, ‘within method’ triangulation, involves using the same method but with varying approaches, ‘dissimilar but complementary’. Within method triangulation was achieved through the use of qualitative semi-structured interviews, observation, descriptive field notes and a reflective research diary (Cowman, 1993, p.790). In addition to within method triangulation, this study also used across method triangulation, as it used both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection.

Analysis

The data set from the self-esteem questionnaires administered to the children in each of the four classes was analysed using SPSS as a means of measuring any differences which might have occurred in the children's self-esteem reports. Repeated measure ANOVAs were conducted with the aim of investigating the main effect of time in general on all of the children's mean scores. Repeated measures ANOVAs were also conducted to investigate the main effect of time between the two groups (case study classrooms and control classrooms) and between male students and female students as the literature had previously identified significant differences in results according to gender.

Interviews were transcribed (See Appendix 30, Appendix 31, Appendix 32 & Appendix 33 for sample transcriptions in French and English) and analysis of these data was undertaken using the 'constant comparative method' (Ryan & Bernard, 2000; Wellington, 2004). Emerging themes and concepts were first coded, using an 'open coding' framework (Rubin & Rubin, 2005), and then refined, compared and contrasted in order to build up categories which would form a coherent picture.

In analysing the parent/step-parent interviews, concepts and themes frequently mentioned by the interviewees were identified and grouped together using a colour scheme. These categories were subsequently refined, compared with each other and contrasted to highlight common meanings (Appendix 34). Contrast and comparisons were also made between the parents of high, medium and low self-esteem focus children with the aim of illuminating similarities and differences.

The teacher interviews were analysed in the same manner. Each interview transcript was read numerous times in order to allow the essential elements to emerge. The teachers' perceptions and observations were coded at first individually and chronologically from the beginning to the end of the year in order to understand changes which might have taken place throughout the school year for each individual teacher. Themes and categories were refined for each teacher and were then compared and contrasted in order to highlight similarities and differences between teachers and classrooms.

Likewise, the individual semi-structured interviews and the focus group interviews with the focus children were analysed thematically in the same manner in order to identify key themes and issues emerging with regards to the children's perception of the PSCE activities

throughout the school year. These interviews, in combination with the semi-structured interviews with the children's parents and carers, the semi-structured interviews with the class teachers and the various observation schedules also provided the rich data necessary to the building up of the individual case studies of the children.

The observation schedule of class participation which used a tally form was analysed quantitatively to establish patterns and was used as a comparative tool to identify changes throughout the year.

Translation and the issues that were raised

The research was conducted in France and therefore the language of communication with the participants was French. Consequently, it was necessary to translate all of the instruments into French prior to data collection. The data were also collected in French (interviews, classroom observations, questionnaires). The interviews were transcribed in French and translated back into English during the analysis stage. This aspect of the study proved challenging at various points in the study. There was a back and forth process of reflecting on the meaning of what was expressed in French, translating these meanings, and not simply the 'words' themselves into English, and then rereading the French again to verify if the translation adequately conveyed the correct meaning originally expressed. Throughout the analysis there was a stark awareness of the fundamental role of the researcher in the interpretative process. A great amount of time was spent immersing myself in the data in order to attempt to convey adequately the meanings of the participants in another language.

Another challenging task was the translation of the BSS self-esteem questionnaire (Burnett, 1996) (originally written in English) from English into French. The questionnaire contained various words or expressions (e.g. 'I like the way I look', 'I feel good about myself' and 'I feel confident in myself') for which a direct translation did not exist, as often is the case between languages. It is for this reason that experts in the field of language and psychology were consulted and that several pilots were conducted.

Ethical Considerations

Wellington refers to the ethical aspect of research as 'the most important criterion in educational research' (2003, p.54). In addition to the researcher possessing and exercising the

virtues of 'kindness', 'honesty' and 'a concern for justice' (Pring, 2004, p.145) the ethical conduct of a study must be planned carefully and reported clearly. A certificate of ethical approval was signed prior to beginning this study which stipulated my commitment to conducting the research according to the ethical guidelines established by the University of Exeter (<http://education.exeter.ac.uk/pages.php>) and detailed the specific ways in which this would be ensured. The ways in which the study endeavoured to follow the guidelines for ethical conduct established by BERA (2004) and the University of Exeter are detailed below.

Informed consent

The children chosen for participation in the study and their parents were informed of the study and its purposes. A detailed account of what was involved in being a participant was presented to them. During the first parent teacher meeting held at the beginning of the school year the teachers informed the parents of the children in the case study of the research project that would take place throughout the school year. Overall the parents welcomed the study, and were enthusiastic about the focus of the research in general.

In addition to the explanation during the parent teacher meeting, a written form was sent home asking for the parents' authorisation for their child to participate in the project as a case study child (Appendix 35 & 36). Two parents from Ecole des Vergers expressed that they did not want their child to be chosen as one of the focus children and these children were not taken into consideration when constituting the cross-section of that class. None of the parents in Ecole du Centre were opposed to having their child chosen to be one of the focus children.

Care was taken to explain to the children individually their right to participate and their right to withdraw from the study at any given time. Throughout the study, time was allotted to reiterate the aims of the study and to allow time for any questions from the participants or their parents. Formal consent was also obtained from the local school inspectors and head teachers of the schools.

Anonymity

The children and their families as well as the class teachers and the schools were ensured confidentiality and anonymity. This entailed careful coding of participants' identities as well as of the name and location of the schools. Data containing the participants' identities were

kept in a safe place in a private office. The written account of the study made use of pseudonyms for the schools and their location and for all of the participants involved.

Sensitivity and respect for participants and their families

Children and their families were treated with respect. Interviews conducted with the teachers and the parents were scheduled at times and places most convenient to them. The researcher made every effort to be sensitive to the needs of the children. Interviews with the children were scheduled during times when the teacher felt they would not be disadvantaged in any way. This included allowing children to take a break during the interview in order to be able to go outside for break time with the other children. Interviews with children were conducted in areas of the school (such as a separate room or small library) in which children were guaranteed privacy but which were familiar to children as well.

Lack of harm, detriment or unreasonable stress

Special care was taken to ensure participants were not disadvantaged in any way and that the study caused them no harm or unreasonable stress. Special attention was given to any probes used during the interviews with children in this regard. When children did not care to answer a question or did not know what to answer after one or two probes, the question was not pursued any further and the interview continued with the next question in a matter of fact way.

The particular nature of research with children

The BERA Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research (2004) underline the vulnerable status of children participating in research and requires researchers to comply with the Articles 3 and 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Article 3 'requires that in all actions concerning children, the best interests of the child must be the primary consideration' whereas Article 12 states that 'children who are capable of forming their own views should be granted the right to express their views freely in all matters concerning them, commensurate with their age and maturity.'

Lindsay (2000) questions how in practice researchers can ensure that children feel able to withdraw from a research project, raising the issue of the nature of power relationships between adults and children. In this study every effort was made to reassure the children of

their freedom of choice in participating in the research, both prior to answering the self-esteem questionnaires and prior to the interviews with the focus children.

Lindsay (2000) also emphasises the intrusive nature of research and asserts that ‘we cannot assume that research subjects simply co-operate with the researcher for a short period of their lives and then move on unchanged’ (p.3). This affirmation remained in the forefront throughout the study and helped the researcher to remain aware of the sensitive nature of research with children on a daily basis.

The data collected in the study are presented in the following four chapters. Chapter 4, discusses the focus children’s parents’/step-parents’ views of the importance of PSCE in schools, the place they felt this area of the curriculum should occupy in the classroom and the impact some PSCE practices they felt may have had on their child’s self-esteem and sense of responsibility. Chapter 5 presents each case study teacher’s educational beliefs, background and perception of self-esteem and highlights the teachers’ perceptions of and experience with various types of PSCE activities implemented throughout the year as revealed through the semi-structured interviews. Based on the data obtained during the mid-year focus group interviews and the end of year semi-structured interviews with the individual focus children, Chapter 6 examines the focus children’s perceptions of the PSCE practices implemented during the year in general and in relationship to possible influences they felt these practices may have had on the children in the class. Chapter 7 profiles six of the twelve focus children as case studies and is a synthesis of the data obtained from the semi-structured interviews with the parents or step-parents of the children, the semi-structured interviews with their class teachers, the semi-structured individual and mid-year focus interviews with the children as well as the data obtained from the observation schedules. Chapter 8 will discuss the key findings emerging from the data and implications for theory, policy and practice.

CHAPTER 4: PARENTS' PERSPECTIVES ON PSCE

This chapter presents the data obtained through the semi-structured interviews conducted with the parents/carers of the twelve focus children in the first trimester of the 2007-2008 school year. In total fifteen parents were interviewed (ten mothers and five fathers). Parents were interviewed in their own homes with most interviews lasting between thirty and forty-five minutes. The interview questions revolved around the themes of self-esteem and responsibility and their development in the classroom and in the home. Parents were asked to explain whether or not they felt it was a teacher's role to contribute to the development of self-esteem and responsibility in their children. They were also asked whether they had noticed any practices which had influenced their child's self-esteem or had helped their child become more responsible and whether they felt there was a link between helping a child become responsible and the development of his or her self-esteem.

Helping children develop healthy self-esteem

Parents' responses to the question: 'What do you feel contributes to helping children develop healthy self-esteem, feel good about themselves and have confidence in themselves' could be grouped into three main categories: the child's surroundings, parental intervention/teaching and the development of an open, nurturing relationship with the child. Almost half of the parents cited a form of parental teaching or intervention as important in the development of self-esteem. The forms of teaching or intervention included giving children 'responsibilities' or helping them to become responsible (4), teaching the child to respect others (2) and helping and encouraging the child to be open to new experiences and meeting new people (2).

Some small differences between the responses given by parents of high self-esteem children and those of medium/low self-esteem emerged. The parents of the high self-esteem children identified two parts to building self-esteem: (a) helping the child become responsible and independent while (b) remaining present to give encouragement or help. The parents of the high self-esteem focus children reported helping their child to be aware of their weaknesses but at the same time actively and constructively helping the child to work on those very weaknesses. They expected the child to be responsible but appeared only to give the child responsibilities appropriate to his/her age. In contrast a low self-esteem child's father discussed at length how he felt his son should 'be responsible' but did not discuss how he

supported him in becoming responsible. The high self-esteem parents also mentioned being present to provide guidelines and support more often than the parents of the low self-esteem children. One parent of a high self-esteem focus child spoke of letting his child learn through her own mistakes but followed this up by saying: ‘at the same time you need to provide direction ...it’s not a matter of forcing but rather guiding the child and sometimes you have to push them a little.’ Another father of a high self-esteem focus child expressed it this way: ‘you have to trust him [the child] and let him experience things for himself ... then always leave the door open for explanations ... provide supervision without restraining him too much.’

A second category of analysis which emerged from parents’ responses to this question was related to the child’s ‘surroundings’. There were two aspects to this: (a) the emotional environment; (b) the physical environment. Several parents of both high and medium/low self-esteem children mentioned the importance of the child having a stable and ‘balanced’ home/family life. This balance was described as a home ‘in which there were no family problems’ or a home which would also serve as a ‘refuge’ or safe place for the child. Other aspects of a child’s surroundings thought to be influential on the development of a child’s self-esteem were the child’s classmates and teachers and his/her extra-curricular activities. Two parents believed the physical environment was important, e.g. living in the countryside or in a place ‘close to nature’ in contrast to living in the city or in low-income housing projects.

A third category referred to as ‘developing an open positive relationship’ emerged through some parents’ responses. These parents emphasised the importance of building a relationship with the child through dialogue, discussion (3) and encouragement (2). One mother did not mention encouragement directly but rather insisted on the absence of ‘insults’ toward the child. The parents who specifically mentioned dialogue emphasised the need to allow time, space and freedom for discussion with children through comments such as ‘You have to make time to talk to each other’ or ‘you have to converse a great deal; you have to talk a lot’.

Particular needs for building individual children’s self-esteem

When asked what they felt were the particular needs of their child with regards to building their self-esteem, parents’ answers could be grouped into four different categories. 1) Four of

the parents stated that they felt their child's needs for self-esteem were being met and that they thought things should simply continue in the same fashion. 2) Four parents mentioned needs related to 'parental behaviour' or parental influences such as 'praising the child for current successes', encouraging the child, allowing the child to have time alone away from siblings and helping the child to 'feel listened to'. 3) Two parents placed their child's self-esteem needs in the domain of another person's (other than their own) influence. One parent who was divorced and was the legal guardian of the focus child expressed emphatically that his son needed to be 'valued by' his mother and 'not rejected'. Another mother said that she hoped the teacher would have a positive influence on her daughter's self-esteem by 'being present more often and checking to see if everything is alright'. One step-mother felt strongly that 'having more friends' would contribute considerably to her child's self-esteem. 4) The fourth category of needs in relation to self-esteem concerned behaviours or skills the parents felt would help the child if acquired. Two parents of high self-esteem focus children had specific ideas in this area. One father said his son would gain in self-esteem by gaining confidence 'in his body' (physical capabilities) while another mother stressed the importance for her son to be able to work faster (e.g. note taking, finish his assignments, exercises or tests in the allotted time) in relation to his school work.

Description of child

When asked 'Could you tell me a little bit about your child's self-esteem and his self-confidence at school and at home?' all of the parents were able to describe at least one aspect of their child, usually relating to behaviour, personality or character traits. A majority of the parents' responses (9) focussed on 'negative traits' or areas in which they felt the child was lacking. Some examples include statements such as: 'He is easily angered' (P2), 'at home she's a real pest' (P3), 'she's unpredictable, I can't trust her with her brothers and sisters' (P4), 'he is fragile, fragile, fragile' (P8), 'he's a very worried child and he's not curious enough with regards to his friends' (P10), 'she likes to be in the forefront, to be noticed even among adults ... it's not always pleasant'

In response to 'could you tell me about your child's talents, strengths hobbies and pastimes', parents most often mentioned 'sports' or artistic abilities such as drawing. Other areas described were 'having lots of friends', 'helping out around the house/on the farm' and references to scholastic abilities, either that the parent felt their child was gifted for learning

or that he/she was hard-working. When asked about their child's 'talents' some parents (3) drew a blank stating that they weren't sure the child had any 'talents' or that they couldn't think of any. After having various prompts, the parents usually thought of some aspect of their child which qualified as a 'talent'.

The question 'Could you tell me how your child gets on with other children? Does he/she make friends easily? Does he/she show his/her emotions easily?' (Q.7) aimed to address the area of the child's social and emotional development. The parents of the four high self-esteem focus children all stated that their child had many friends and that they made friends easily. However, one mother of a child from this group complained that she felt that at times the other children used her child as a 'back up' or 'spare wheel' when there were no other children to play with. Most of the medium and low self-esteem focus children (6 out of 8) were described by their parents as having fewer friends, just 'one' close friend or no friends at all and were described as being more 'exclusive' or 'selective' in their friendships. One mother said of her daughter 'She doesn't share her friendship. With Mélissa it's all or nothing'. Overall the medium and low self-esteem focus children were described as generally showing their emotions easily either through bouts of anger ('slamming doors'), pouting, or crying easily. In contrast, the high self-esteem children were either described as being 'balanced' and 'easy-going' or not described at all in terms of how they displayed their emotions.

Attitudes toward school

Almost all of the parents felt their child liked school and found pleasure learning new things (10 out of 12). The two parents who expressed doubts concerning their child's enthusiasm towards school mentioned relationships with certain subjects or 'types of learning'. For example, the mother of a high self-esteem focus child said 'School is not his thing. There are subjects that he likes, history, for example. He really enjoyed reading the story about 'the yellow star' [children's book about the Holocaust], otherwise, no more than that.' Another father echoed this comment saying 'It depends on which ones [subjects]. As long as it revolves around 'school', it doesn't work, as soon they talk about history and biology and all that, she starts to ask questions ... but if they go back to grammar and spelling, she's no longer there.'

Responsibilities at home

With the exception of one parent, all the interviewees felt their child was ‘responsible’ at home. The step-mother who felt her child was not very responsible pointed to the fact that his room was rarely tidied despite the rule that this must be done every other day. However, this same step-mother mentioned that, when asked, this child eagerly clears the table and helps with the cooking. This child’s parents had also previously mentioned that he was responsible for walking home with his younger brother and for making sure he was safe along the way.

Responsibilities mentioned by the parents were: Going to and from school alone, staying home alone or watching siblings while the parents were absent, doing his/her homework without being told, taking care of his/her room (picking up and vacuuming), taking care of pets, ‘following rules’ (coming home on time, telling the truth, locking the door, not leaving the house when the parents are not home), performing household tasks (emptying dishwasher, changing bedding, fetching the mail, setting the table, clearing the table, helping with the cooking, putting away clean laundry, helping with yard work, taking out the rubbish), going to the corner store, managing money and organising overnight stays (Table 4.1).

Some parents mentioned very specific rules and or tasks which their child followed or did on a regular basis. Other parents mentioned things that the child did from time to time but often it was on the basis of whether the child felt like doing it or not. One mother of a low self-esteem child said with regard to giving her son responsibilities, ‘I don’t want to ask him to set the table even though I know that he is capable of doing it and that he would do it if asked to... Maybe I want to relieve him too much, but I don’t think so. ... I don’t give them [my children] any [responsibilities] because I really like when they have nothing to think about.’

There also appeared to be a distinction between responsibilities which were done after much reminding and responsibilities which were done by the child without prompting. This difference seemed to be linked to parental expectations. Several parents of the high self-esteem focus children described their child in such a way: ‘He usually does these things without us reminding him to do so, at least that’s what we expect him to do’ (P.10). ‘We don’t have to remind him to do things, he does them all by himself’ (P.6). ‘She doesn’t always feel like it but she does it anyway....She’ manages to do a lot of things [concerning school work] on her own so I don’t want to question her about that’ (P3). In contrast, one of the parents of a

medium self-esteem focus child stated: 'She helps me take down the laundry, but, well, she really has to want to do it' (P9).

Table 4.1 : Children's home responsibilities

Responsibility mentioned by parents	N° of girls	N° of boys	Total
Helping with household tasks (emptying the dishwasher, changing bedding, fetching the mail, setting the table, helping with the cooking, putting away clean laundry, yard work, taking out the rubbish)	4	4	8
Going to and from school alone	2	4	6
Staying home alone	2	3	5
Doing their homework and preparing for school without being told	3	1	4
Taking care of their room (picking up and vacuuming)	0	3	3
Managing money	1	2	3
Watching siblings while the parents were absent or taking care of siblings	1	2	3
Taking care of pets	1	1	2
'Following rules' (coming home on time, telling the truth, locking the door, not leaving the house if the parents were not home)	2	0	2
Going to the corner store alone	0	2	2
Remembering to do a task (bringing something home from school, remembering to tell the teacher something)	0	2	2
Helping with the family business	0	1	1
Organising social activities such as overnight stays at friends or relatives	1	0	1

Parents' view of personal, social, and citizenship education in the classroom

Although parents were not specifically asked how they viewed PSCE practices in the classroom, this area was investigated through various questions addressing practices which the parents felt had influenced their child with regards to their self-esteem or responsibility and how they viewed the teacher's role. When asked whether they felt it was a teacher's role to help children become more responsible, several parents specifically expressed that they felt this was not the role of the teacher. One father said it was 'not the teacher's role to be a substitute for the parents' adding that 'school is for learning to read and to write and those kinds of activities. Civic education is the parents' job'. Two other parents echoed this point of view saying that PSCE is 'primarily the parents' role' and that 'it shouldn't be the priority' for teachers.

In contrast to these parents' views, the majority of the parents expressed the view that parents and teachers were 'complementary' to each other, and that each provided 'continuity' for the other. One father described parents and teachers as 'links of a chain' stating that 'for parents all by themselves, it's not so easy, for teachers all by themselves it's not so easy, parents and teachers must be complementary.' Several parents suggested that teachers have had to assume this role due to a certain 'laxness' or 'overindulgence' on the part of some parents who have not assumed their parental responsibilities. In this case, one father emphasised that 'teachers could be of great help'.

Many parents felt that teachers had a powerful and different kind of influence on children, referring to the large amount of time the children spend in class and the different nature of the responsibilities they were allowed to take on. One mother pointed out that the viewpoint of the teacher was at times more readily accepted than her own stating 'when the teachers say something it works right away but at home it's not the same.' A few of the parents felt that PSCE was an 'inherent part of the curriculum' and that the classroom was in some way 'the school of life' which should aim to prepare children for the future. One mother said 'Nowadays, you can't hide anything from children anyway ... they know everything, as much as adults, which is not always an excellent thing but that's the way it is. I think that in fact you have to talk about these things'.

Parents perceptions of the influence of PSCE practices on their child

Parents were also asked whether they had noticed any particular teaching practices which had had a positive influence on their child's self-esteem or which they felt had helped their child to become more responsible. Over half of the parents cited 'class responsibilities' held within the class as having a positive effect on these areas. These responsibilities were regular designated tasks assigned to children on a bi-weekly or monthly basis. In Ecole des Vergers the students were able to gradually acquire greater responsibilities by demonstrating competence in smaller areas, whereas the teacher in Ecole du Centre focussed on giving every child a responsibility and encouraged the class to work as a team. The responsibilities assigned ranged from picking up papers off the floor, to erasing the board, to watching over the class when the teacher left the room. What might seem like everyday, ordinary classroom activities apparently had quite an influence on the children which led the parents to comment

at length on the positive benefits of these. One mother whose son did not often show much enthusiasm for school said:

When he is in charge of taking the chairs down in the morning he's so happy. You have to be on time, you have to leave earlier in the morning for school, he does this job really well ... He gets there before the bell rings because it takes time to take the all chairs down and prepare the room. He is thrilled! It lasts for weeks and he never tires of doing it.

Most of the parents referred to how proud their children felt when accomplishing these tasks. One mother said her daughter took her responsibility 'very seriously', that 'she felt valued' and 'put her whole heart into it'.

One mother said the class council allowed the children to feel in control and have some sort of mastery over their own lives 'All of a sudden, they feel like they are the actors ... the actors of their own lives. They express themselves, which is good, and they express themselves only if they want to.'

Another mother referred to the fact that the children had an important influence on each other's behaviour and that they were perhaps more sensitive to the comments and judgements of their classmates made during the class council than to those of the teacher, stating, 'You wouldn't believe how they [the children] are attentive to what the others say to them.' This mother went on to describe how surprised her daughter had recently been when congratulated by the class during a council meeting for having modified her behaviour, saying 'She said "Can you believe it? I was congratulated because I didn't chat in class this week!"' In addition to this, one mother spoke of a classroom election and a visit to the French parliament which was to take place, saying that 'it shows them that they can in fact take their place in society, in a socio-professional group. It's so important not to stay on the sidelines ... you have to put up a fight these days.' This same mother emphasised the positive role of discussing current events and moral dilemmas in the classroom.

Several parents cited circle time, cooperative games and cooperative group work within the class as activities which helped them to 'learn to work together and to 'become responsible for each other'. Two parents identified class/school projects, and two stressed the positive influence on responsibility in having the homework assignments a week in advance. One father said he could not think of any specific activities which had helped his child become more responsible, but that this was achieved in 'a general manner' by the teacher. Another

father, however, said he was opposed to children holding responsibilities within the classroom stating that ‘those are the kinds of activities you do at home because you live there’.

Link between responsibility and self-esteem

When asked whether they felt there was a link between helping children become more responsible and raising their self-esteem, all but two of the parents interviewed felt strongly that there was a link between children becoming responsible and having high self-esteem. Many of them said they felt the one was not possible without the other and that in a certain sense they fed into each other. One father expressed it this way:

One cannot necessarily function without the other. If they [children] have high self-esteem, they might be able to do certain things more easily, and then they'll have more self-confidence. And if you let them do certain things [on their own] they will have better self-esteem. They will perhaps have better self-esteem if they know that they themselves are able to do certain things on their own.

Several parents referred to the fact that having responsibilities helped the child feel ‘valued’ and led to the feeling of having a purpose and being recognised. The two mothers who felt that there was no definite link between responsibility and self-esteem referred to examples of adults who held important responsibilities but underneath were quite unsure of themselves. However, one of the mothers did admit that she was not sure if one could generalise between children and adults.

KEY ISSUES EMERGING

The role of support and guidance in the fostering of responsibility and self-esteem

All of the parents were able to cite responsibilities their child held at home and most of the parents expected their child to be responsible. However, the parents of the high self-esteem children explicitly mentioned the necessity to provide guidance and support for the child as they were learning to be responsible. These parents felt it necessary for the child to make mistakes on his or her own but within a context of support and direction. This was absent from the interviews with some of the parents of the low self-esteem children who had high expectations concerning the responsibilities of their child but did not specifically mention providing guidance or support in this area. Previous research by Coopersmith (1967) has

highlighted the link between the combination of high parental expectations and consistent parental support and high self-esteem in children. In this line, children of authoritative parents (highly demanding and highly responsive) have been shown to have higher self-esteem than children of authoritarian parents (highly demanding but not very responsive) (Ladd, 2005). In addition to this, further studies have identified parental support as being linked to higher self-esteem in children (Gardner and Cutrona, 2004).

Parents' awareness of and support for PSCE practices in the classroom

Most of the parents knew much about the PSCE practices which had taken place in their child's classroom. It is important to stress that the examples they mentioned as having a positive effect on either the development of their child's self-esteem or responsibility came spontaneously from the parents themselves and were not solicited directly by the interviewer. In most cases, the examples that parents gave were backed up by quotes from their child or descriptions of their child at home which led the interviewer to believe that the children themselves had reported the classroom practices back to the parents and that they were the main source of information for them.

Overall, with the exception of one father, the parents interviewed supported the PSCE activities mentioned in the classroom and felt they had had a positive influence on their child and on the functioning of the classroom. It is interesting to note that the child of the father who felt PSCE type activities should only take place in the home refused to participate in most of these activities in class. Although this is an isolated example it can raise the question of the importance and influence of parental support with regards to PSCE practices and children's willingness and desire to take part in such practices. Holden (2004) suggests that there is a need for dialogue between teachers and parents with regard to citizen education in order for both parties to arrive at a 'mutual understanding'. Increased dialogue could provide the support necessary for positive engagement in such activities.

The role of PSCE practices for children experiencing difficulties

Nearly all of the parents were able to point to practices which had helped their child become responsible and which had positively influenced their self-esteem. This was especially the case for children who were having a difficult time in school for various reasons, whether it was due to learning difficulties, lack of social skills or a difficult family background. For

these children, having responsibilities within the classroom either through taking chairs down in the morning before class, being responsible for materials or directing the class council, gave them an opportunity to be valued, and to learn about and feel they had their place in the world, albeit on a small scale. As one mother said ‘they become actors of their own lives’. In providing a safe context within the classroom it appeared that children were allowed to experiment with responsibility, decision making, and self-expression.

Links between responsibility at home and in the classroom

The overwhelming majority of the parents felt there was a definite link between giving children the opportunity to be responsible and their self-esteem. Interestingly, the parents of the children who had been identified as having high self-esteem were already practicing this in the home. In fact, when asked what they were doing at home to help their child become more responsible, they mentioned numerous tasks but described them in such a way that suggested they felt this was nothing extraordinary in itself. This could be evidence that the small everyday activities which take place in the classroom, such as the responsibilities described above, work together with and build on to what children are already practicing to reinforce the mechanisms which support self-confidence and healthy self-esteem.

The data obtained from the semi-structured interviews with the parents and carers of the focus children presented in this chapter has shed some light on the important role held by parents/step-parents in the development of children’s self-esteem. It has also highlighted parents’ perceptions of possible positive influences of PSCE practices in the classroom on children’s self-esteem and on the acquisition of responsibility within the classroom. Overall, the interviews provided evidence of parents’ awareness of PSCE practices taking place in the classroom and of their generally favourable attitude toward such practices. The following chapter focuses on the class teachers’ perceptions of PSCE activities. It examines the teachers’ views on the development of self-esteem within the classroom, their perceptions of the PSCE practices implemented throughout the school year and their evaluation of these practices in general and with regards to children’s self-esteem.

CHAPTER 5: TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF SELF-ESTEEM AND PSCE IN THE CLASSROOM

This chapter discusses the two class teachers' perceptions of and experience with various types of Personal, Social and Citizenship Education (PSCE) activities throughout the course of the school year as revealed through semi-structured interviews conducted at different points during the year. The focus is on those which were implemented as part of the study along with others which the teachers introduced individually. It also discusses each teacher's educational beliefs, background and perception of self-esteem.

The interviews which were conducted at the beginning, middle and end of the school year investigated the teachers' perceptions of self-esteem, the PSCE practices they implemented during the study and their views on giving children responsibility in the classroom. Specific questions addressed the nature of self-esteem and the way it develops in children, practices which influence self-esteem and those considered likely to improve children's self-esteem, the relationship between encouraging responsibility in children and increasing their self-esteem and possible influences PSCE practices implemented in the classroom have on children.

MME NORMAND, ECOLE DES VERGERS

Contextual information

The Ecole des Vergers school was recognised by many local teachers and teacher educators as being a school with difficult children because of its location and high levels of government subsidised housing. The school was situated at the far end of the region in a fairly isolated geographical location. This meant the cost of housing and land was less expensive than other areas which may have been the reason it was chosen by the government as a specified area for low-income housing.

Mme Normand, the class teacher, explained that many of the children in this school were in foster homes or had very difficult home situations most likely due to the low socio-economic profiles of the families in the area. Mme Normand, age 40, had studied foreign languages in central France and had spent several years studying and working in England and in Germany before training to be a teacher in the east of France. At the start of the project she had been teaching in primary schools for 16 years, including 3 years teaching in two different schools

for children with special needs, and had also been a teacher trainer at the University Teacher Training Institute for five years. As a teacher trainer she conducted seminars for trainee teachers and for practising teachers in her area including seminars on the area of citizenship education. She also hosted trainee teachers in her class and was responsible for evaluating them and for supervising their professional dissertations.

Initial interview (September, 2007)

Educational Beliefs

Mme Normand had been implementing the practice of Institutional Pedagogy (Bertrand, 2003; Laffitte, 1999) in her classroom for approximately seven years prior to the study. She came into contact with Institutional Pedagogy during her teacher training internship before being certified as a teacher. The powerfulness of this pedagogy impacted on her and motivated her to research the area further. Institutional pedagogy involves a combination of various practices which aim to give the child tools for self-expression and self-management. It revolves around group dynamics in the classroom and emphasises the powerful nature of giving children a voice. There are various routines during the week which allow children the opportunity to express themselves. Once a week, usually at the start of the day, there is a sharing time ('le quoi de neuf') during which any child may talk about something of interest to him/her. The children may talk about what they did at the weekend or a favourite game they like to play.

The children also participate in what is referred to as the class council - an essential tenet of Institutional Pedagogy. The class council includes all of the members of the class, follows a set agenda each week and works within a basic set of rules which ensure confidentiality and provide a safe environment in which children may express themselves. Each week a different child is designated to be the president of the council. This role involves ensuring the agenda and council rules are followed, designating who may speak, and issuing warnings for misconduct when necessary. The issues that arise most frequently concern the daily functioning of the classroom and the relationships between the children. During the class council, children have the right to raise problems or concerns but also have the opportunity to praise or congratulate other children in the class for their improved behaviour, work, attitude or accomplishments. It is during the class council, that contracts for behaviour improvement are established, projects are discussed, classroom responsibilities are appointed and 'behaviour belts' are attributed for achieving a certain level of good behaviour. These issues

are not only addressed by the teacher but by the whole class. Every child in the classroom is given the opportunity to express himself on the issues that are raised during the class council (Bertrand, 2003; Laffitte, 1999).

Mme Normand's experience with Institutional Pedagogy profoundly influenced her attitudes towards classroom practice. During her interviews, she frequently referred to her class of children as 'the group' and emphasised the influence of the group on individual children in the class.

Perception of self-esteem

During the initial interview Mme Normand described self-esteem as a way an individual feels about him/herself.

[Self-esteem is] what a person thinks of himself and how he feels about himself. If a person is more or less positive he has high self-esteem. If a child says 'I can't do that' or 'I'm useless' he has low self-esteem. Yes, it is how a child feels about himself and about his learning. It is formed through others' views of him, his parents and, well, those around him.

She put special emphasis on parental influences on the child during the early stages of life but also mentioned others who come into contact with the child later in life when the child begins the 'socialisation process', meaning when he begins his schooling, as having an influence on a child's self-esteem.

Practices positively influencing self-esteem: past observations and plans for the school year.

When asked if there were any practices which she had noticed as having had an influence on children's self-esteem, she immediately referred to her teaching practice with a teacher trainer who was practising Freinet pedagogy (Bruliard & Schlemminger, 1996), a child centred pedagogy similar to Institutional Pedagogy with formal cooperative structures based on the practices of the French educator Célestin Freinet (Bertrand, 2003; Héveline & Robbes, 2000). The practices in her own classroom which she felt had influenced children's self-esteem in a positive way were also those which play a fundamental role in institutional pedagogy. The first practice to be cited was the class council. This was where the role of 'the group' was, she felt, most effective because:

That's where the viewpoint of the group is made known, not just the teacher's viewpoint. There are both of them. The feedback from the group is what really makes them move forward.

Class council

Mme Normand reported that during class council meetings she had witnessed transformations in many children. When children were praised or criticised during the meetings it motivated them either to modify their behaviour or to continue their positive behaviour which then usually warranted praise from the group.

When children are praised during the class council they are really happy even if some children try to hide it. ... If a child is criticised the group says to him 'look, your behaviour is bothering us' and then we help him, we all work together to find a solution to help him. ... So, after a while, he makes progress. Even the smallest of progress counts, and he really wants to continue to make progress.

Class responsibilities

The class responsibilities (such as erasing the board, taking chairs down in the morning or tidying the classroom : see Appendix 37) were also cited as having had a positive influence on children's self-esteem and were linked to group feedback as well. During the class council the other children can say whether these responsibilities have been carried out in an acceptable way or not. The responsibilities are also linked to the 'behaviour belts'. In order to have a job with a greater amount of responsibility, such as managing the class library, distributing intra-school messages or being president of the class council, the child must first show a certain level of maturity and responsibility by earning the corresponding behaviour belt (Appendix 38).

Classroom rules

Mme Normand mentioned the classroom rules as having influenced children's self-esteem pointing to the sense of security they provide for the children. For example, the rule that no one is allowed to make fun of another child in the classroom had been cited by the children themselves on occasions when the rule was broken. The children often referred to the rule saying 'that's the rule, it is up there in writing' referring to the list of rules posted on the wall of the classroom (Appendix 39).

The importance of praise

The last element Mme Normand thought had positively influenced children's self-esteem was the way in which she responded to the children and encouraged them.

When something is not done well I tell them so, but I always help them not to remain in a negative experience and I explain how they can move forward. ... I always tell them they are allowed to make mistakes but afterwards I help them to make progress and then I really give them praise for it!

Acknowledging children, encouraging respect, motivating the child

During the initial interview Mme Normand mentioned four ways in which teachers could positively influence children's self-esteem: acknowledging children, listening to children, respecting children and ensuring they respect others, and giving them the desire to make progress. By 'acknowledging' the child in the classroom Mme Normand meant allowing the child their identity and place in the classroom and ensuring they are accepted by the others. In illustrating what this meant she said:

I always put something on the door, a presentation of the class where each child describes himself individually. Then I ensure that all the children in the class and any visitors who come acknowledge and are aware of all of the children who make up that class.

With regards to helping a child want to make progress she explained:

The teacher has a very important role in helping them want to make progress. Even if they make mistakes... they are allowed to make mistakes but with the goal of moving forward and not simply letting them make mistakes and not moving on.

Practices to be implemented

As mentioned above, the practices which Mme Normand felt would positively influence the self-esteem of the children in her class revolved around the structure of Institutional Pedagogy including behaviour belts and personal contracts. She emphasised the necessity for maintaining regular times for children to express themselves - '*lieux de parole*'- time for sharing with the class. The sharing times she had scheduled included a weekly morning sharing time '*le quoi de neuf*' which took place every Monday morning for 30 minutes and the class council which took place every Friday afternoon for an hour. The objectives corresponding to each behaviour belt (Appendix 39) were to be discussed in class and reviewed bi-monthly during the class council. For children struggling with their disruptive behaviour, student contracts would be drawn up and consulted at each class council as necessary. Mme Normand insisted on the importance of the child conducting their own self-evaluation of progress made during the week and on the feedback from the class. These elements she felt were vital to helping a child improve behaviour and thus gain in confidence

and self-esteem. What was emphasised overall in these practices was giving children the desire to make progress through a process of accountability and self-evaluation, and also through setting up of various levels of goals toward which they could work.

During the initial interview the PSCE activities which were to be introduced during the year as part of the study were not specifically mentioned by Mme Normand as practices she felt which would positively influence self-esteem. When asked why these activities had not been mentioned, she replied that it seemed quite obvious that these activities would have an influence on children's self-esteem and that given that these activities were part of the project to begin with it did not occur to her to specifically refer to them.

Mid year interview (February, 2008)

Reflections on practices, possible influences on children's self-esteem

The mid-year interview explored Mme Normand's perceptions of the effectiveness and influence of the practices implemented up to that point. The positive influence of the specified PSCE activities were mentioned and discussed. Three themes emerged: improved class cohesion; acceptance of other children; and being able to make links between activities which led to better understanding.

Improved class cohesion

Mme Normand reported a sense of improved class cohesion and acceptance of others in the classroom. She explained that, in the beginning of the year, she had noticed that the children had not wanted to work in groups. Some children had a difficult time working with others as they had different views on how to go about accomplishing the tasks and insisted on working alone, while others refused to work with particular children in the class. During the PSCE activities at the beginning of the school year many of the children avoided contact with Bryce, one of the focus children deemed to have low self esteem. These feelings of avoidance and rejection toward Bryce also emerged at times during the feedback session following the activities. Mme Normand did emphasise, however, that by the middle of the year this phenomenon of isolation and rejection had been considerably reduced.

Now, children like Bryce are able to fit in and to work in a group, which wasn't the case in the beginning of the year. ...The PSCE activities are going well now. The others now get close to Bryce. Nobody has a problem if they have to sit on his lap during the activity (Comfortable Coco activity). But from time to time during the feedback session

some children had mentioned not wanting to get close to him. So although there is still a slight element of rejection, overall he is now well integrated in the class.

Understanding and making links

Mme Normand also commented on the way in which the children were beginning to make links between the activities. This helped the children understand their purpose. The turning point was an activity which illustrated cooperation and conflict resolution ('The Story of the Two Donkeys' which shows how two donkeys cooperate in order to achieve their goal of eating the straw on either side of them, see Appendix 3). The children were to organise strips of pictures of the story in the order they felt was appropriate. Previously, the teacher had introduced various cooperative activities ('back to back', 'musical circles') but was not sure that the children had understood the meaning and purpose of the activities.

What worked really well was the activity with the two donkeys because they really came out with some interesting things. When we did the review they talked about the other activities we'd done in fact such as the activity where you try to stand up together. They said 'Hey, the donkeys did what we did when we were in the hallway back to back and we couldn't get up by ourselves. We had to work together!' They did it there. Before that, I wasn't sure that they had made the link between all of the activities ... but when we talked about the donkeys ... they thought about the activities we had done previously.

Until the donkey activity Mme Normand felt that the PSCE activities were somewhat artificial. She said she could not identify that the activities were having some influence on children's understanding and behaviour. Once the children made the connection between the co-operation and conflict resolution elements in the donkey story and certain PSCE activities, Mme Normand was able to extend this understanding to 'real life' situations in the classroom. Using this point of reference she was able to draw the children's attention to the same processes which were taking place during the class council, in the playground and in their everyday classroom activities.

Impact of the Class Council and sharing time

During the mid-year interview Mme Normand also emphasised the positive impact of the class council. Some of the children were making, she felt, remarkable progress in their behaviour. They were being criticised less and less during the council and were better able to handle frustration and disappointment. She specifically mentioned Bryce's progress:

One time during the council Bryce spoke up and said that he really felt good in the classroom and that he was really happy. He's really making good progress with the

behaviour belts. When we distributed the behaviour belts last week he didn't get his because his writing hadn't improved enough, and it is a difficult level to attain. So, he stamped his foot, he gave it a good stamp but he didn't start crying and five minutes later he was participating again in the council. He almost never cries in class anymore. During the class council he's criticised less and less. ... He is criticised less and he gets some very positive feedback from the group ...He's much better integrated.

The 'quoi de neuf', was also described as a valuable time which helped children share things about themselves and learn things about each other. Mme Normand mentioned that children did not often make an effort to get to know some of the other children; this activity provided an opportunity for that. Mme Normand mentioned in particular Bryce who was almost always alone at break time and who rarely had friends to play with:

It's a time where he can talk about what he did at the weekend and where there's a chance others might take an interest in him. This might lead other children perhaps to want to go and play at his house. One time he said he had played with some game on his Game-boy and another child said 'Oh yeah, that game is good' and Bryce. said 'well, you can come to my house and play if you want' So, it's not just sharing for the sake of sharing, it's really about finding things you have in common with children you wouldn't have previously thought of getting to know.

Importance of a combination of practices

When asked whether she felt certain practices had had an influence on the children's self-esteem, Mme Normand underlined the importance of a combination of practices which, to her, would be ineffective if used in isolation.

If you implement just one thing, if you just give them classroom responsibilities, you won't have the same results. But given that everything here is interrelated in fact ... given that in the class council we discuss their contracts which are eventually linked to their responsibilities so we then talk about classroom responsibilities, and then we talk about conflicts and what is going on in the classroom and in the end it is all related. Once everything has been linked together it has an influence on the children's behaviour and I would say that that is something that works.

Overall Mme Normand felt that the PSCE activities and practices were proving successful. For her an activity was defined as successful when no one was rejected, when the children accepted contact with all of the other children without any conflict and when they had an idea of the purpose or meaning of the activity. However, she believed that the success of the activities required a long standing relationship between the teacher and the class. In other circumstances (where a supply teacher, regular replacement teacher or outside activity leader

had led the PSCE practices, the children seemed to feel insecure and some children reverted back to previous undesirable behaviours.

As soon as there is someone else who comes, Friday for example, there was a supply teacher and things didn't go well for Bryce at all. He left the classroom and started crying.

Projects

Collaborative project work was reported by Mme Normand as positively impacting on the children's self-esteem. She referred to the children's participation in the Christmas production, and to their organisation of a photo and art exhibition following their week-long nature trip, stating that this was one occasion when all of the children participated and felt good about themselves.

Everything that revolves around the project, everything they prepared for the nature trip exhibition, these are things that the children are really happy to do and when they show their parents they are really...well it builds up their self-esteem. And everyone gets involved, even Céleste takes part too then.

The class projects were managed by the children with the help of the teacher. A board was made with tasks, deadlines and the names of the children responsible for each task. Each week the class would consult the board to see if the tasks were being accomplished. The children were accountable to the class and invested themselves fully in the tasks. Mme Normand highlighted the value of this collaborative activity in teaching the children the importance of accomplishing their tasks and of doing a thorough job.

Reflection on themes from the initial interview

Some themes emerging during the initial interview were revisited in the mid-year interview. When asked in what ways she recognised and acknowledged children, Mme Normand pointed to her manner of interacting with the children on a daily basis. She stressed the need to call on the children frequently and the way in which she strove to involve them in their learning. She explained that she did not simply ask them for the answer but that she also asked them to explain the steps they took to get to that answer. By systematically verbalising the processes necessary to obtain the correct answer, Mme Normand felt the children developed a clearer understanding of a topic and that they eventually connected the different bits of learning together.

In returning to the theme of ‘the group’ and its influence in her classroom, Mme Normand highlighted the group’s ability to help individual children to progress by initiating the desire to improve. In this context, she emphasised the importance of individual accountability.

When someone is really having a problem in the class and we set up special circumstances and plans to help them out and when everyone is in agreement, the child who benefits from these special circumstances understands it and is aware of it which makes them want to make progress because they know that the group is making an effort for them and they too want to make an effort for the group.

Final interview (June, 2008)

Changes and positive outcomes over the year

In reflecting on the activities and practices implemented throughout the year, Mme Normand described a type of progression in the activities which she felt had led to a progressive change in attitudes in the children. Overall, the activities allowed the children to ‘get to know each other’, to ‘come into contact with each other’, ‘to develop self-expression’, and to ‘learn cooperation’.

Activities which encouraged ‘contact’ between children

Several of the activities (such as ‘comfortable coco’, ‘touch something’ ‘back to back’ or ‘statues’) were reported as having helped the children to come into contact physically with each other. Through the gradual implementation of these activities children learned to get close and even touch other children whom they had previously rejected and refused to touch. They were able to see that they could touch each other without it being some form of aggression. They were also able to see that nothing negative would happen upon coming into contact with certain other children. According to Mme Normand the attitudes of rejection with regard to certain children in the class had completely disappeared by the end of the school year. Mme Normand emphasised the gradual nature of this process, noting that it had been a progressive learning experience for the children.

They really learned to come into contact with each other physically, which was pretty difficult for them because there were quite a few children who had already had difficulties communicating with words and any physical contact usually meant some form of aggression. Here (during the PSCE activities) they realised that they could touch each other without it being a form of aggression.

Self-expression activities

In addition to the weekly sharing times, certain PSCE activities gave the children the opportunity to express themselves verbally or in writing. The 'Warm Fuzzy' activity in which they wrote positive messages to their classmates was spontaneously carried on by nearly all of the children in the class throughout the school year. Mme Normand emphasised the positive effect this activity had on the children's self-esteem when they received nice messages from the others in the classroom and pointed to the fact that children do not often get the opportunity to put their feelings into words in everyday classroom circumstances.

The children who receive the warm fuzzies are so happy. It helps them to get off to a good start in the morning and to feel good about themselves. It also reinforces their self-esteem to get a nice message from someone. It gives them a positive self-image. As for the children who write (give) the 'warm fuzzies', it's really good for them to have the opportunity to write them, because they don't always get the chance to say those things. It gives them the chance to say something. On the playground they don't often have the time. It helps them to think about their feelings. It's a continuation of the giving praise ritual ('les félicitations') during the class council except that often in the class council we're limited on time. Here, if they want to write something nice to someone, they can do it anytime they want.

Some of the other activities which required the children to cooperate in a group situation taught them the importance and necessity of listening to and sharing ideas with the other children. The story of the two donkeys was an example of this. Mme Normand stressed that this activity made them aware of the importance of getting along with each other through discussion. The activity 'draw a conflict' had the same influence on the children. They first had to decide on a conflict to draw which required discussion. They realised they had to each express their views in order to come to a common agreement.

Class council : the importance of discussing and learning to express oneself

Mme Normand highlighted that it was during the regular class council time that the children consistently practised self-expression. During this time the children learned to put into words what was happening in the classroom. They were able to verbalise their conflicts and discuss things that were not working well. It taught them to express themselves calmly with words which replaced other aggressive forms of communication.

Class council: commitment and accountability to the class

During the year, the children became increasingly able to tolerate frustration and to make and keep commitments to the class. The behaviour belts which were awarded during the class council gave the children specific goals toward which they could strive.

It really means something for the children. They make decisions; they try to hold themselves to those decisions. It is the same thing for the behaviour belts. It's something towards which they must strive. They really make an effort because they know it will be discussed at the class council and because it is in writing and they make a commitment in front of the whole class and that really motivates them.

Overall perception and evaluation of PSCE activities

Mme Normand stated that she would continue all of the activities that had been implemented during the project in the next school year. However she said she had identified ways in which some activities could be improved. She also felt she would modify the order in which she introduced the activities so as to establish a more gradual progression.

Reflections and concerns about certain activities

Despite the positive influence the 'Warm Fuzzies' activity had had on all of the children, Mme Normand noticed that some children systematically received more than others. She had witnessed some children expectantly opening their envelope only to find that no one had given them a Warm Fuzzy. Although Mme Normand was opposed to obliging children in the class to write to all of the children as she thought this would be artificial, she was concerned about finding a solution to this problem. She felt that one solution would be to discuss the situation during the class council in order to raise the children's awareness of the problem and to collectively find a solution.

Mme Normand had also questioned her own role during the class council. Although she had been practising class councils in her classroom for seven years she was constantly trying to improve their functioning. She wondered if she should intervene as often as she had during the year but felt that the presence and intervention of an adult was often necessary.

Maybe I should intervene less often. Yet there are some things the children can not manage on their own even the [children at the] CMI[level] (expected level of nine-year-olds). ... I often wonder if a child can manage the class council on his own, even when he has experienced it for two years. There are some children who do well at calling on the other children or who are able to make decisions, but there are still times when I have to intervene.

Mme Normand had also reflected upon the order in which she had introduced the activities. She felt that the chronology of the activities was crucial to ensuring the children benefited fully from each activity. For example, she felt she had introduced the 'coat of arms' activity too early in the year before the children knew each other well enough.

I think that if they had had more contact between themselves then they would have wanted to get to know each other better. Here, it was too early in the year and there wasn't much contact between them. They didn't feel the need to get to know the other children.

Practices encouraging responsibility and influences on the children's self-esteem

Mme Normand identified three classroom practices which she felt had helped the children to become more responsible: the individual classroom responsibilities helped them to learn to be responsible for the class; the personal contracts taught them to be responsible for their own behaviour; and the behaviour belts encouraged them to be responsible for themselves and for their work. Mme Normand especially emphasised the fact that these various practices required the child to make a commitment in front of the whole group. This verbal commitment along with the written commitment, she felt, helped the children to exercise better self-control and to achieve the small goals set before them.

Mme Normand felt strongly that these practices which encouraged responsibility positively influenced the children's self-esteem. She emphasised that when they were responsible for something, they saw themselves as grown up and realised that others could trust them. With the behaviour belts, they understood that as they grew in maturity, in terms of their behaviour and actions towards others, they were also able to be given more extensive responsibilities. Having greater responsibility raised their self-esteem as they perceived themselves as being successful members of their group.

Evolving definition of self-esteem

Mme Normand explained, at the close of the project, that her definition of self-esteem had become more refined. She expressed having a more structured and precise idea about self-esteem after having read material linked to the PSCE activities that she had been given. Through this information she discovered many different areas in which teachers could work to positively influence children's self-esteem. Her definition at the close of the study was as follows:

I would say that self-esteem is like a mirror, it's the way we see ourselves. The mirror only reflects the physical aspect of self-esteem, but it's more than that, it is made up of all of the person's experiences. It is not just the physical aspect. When I say mirror I mean...it's an image, how we see ourselves.

Insights gained and implications for future practice

Based on the interviews conducted throughout the year with Mme Normand various aspects of the PSCE practices were highlighted as being particularly effective. The activities seemed to help children accept others in the classroom. This atmosphere of class cohesion appeared to be a step towards helping children with low or medium self-esteem feel accepted. The activities also seemed to be way to break down barriers between children; first on a physical level and then with regards to their attitudes.

Mme Normand stressed the importance of scheduling the activities in a progressive order so that the children gradually become comfortable with each other and want to get to know each other better. Specific times set aside for children to express themselves provided children who did not often get the chance to share with the others in the class the opportunity to do so. This was also a means for the other children to get to know these children and to see them in a different way.

It was important that the children made links between the PSCE activities and their practical meaning in everyday situations. The teacher served as a mediator in this way by providing discussion time and helping children make those links. Once the children had understood the parallels between activities and actual situations in the classroom all of the activities took on another meaning for them.

Mme Normand often emphasised accountability to the group. The structures supporting this accountability (class council, contracts, and behaviour belts) helped children to have a clear idea of what was expected of them. This seemed to improve children's feelings of self-efficacy. They could work through certain difficulties and saw that they were capable of succeeding which influenced their approach to future tasks. She also insisted on the necessity of a global approach to influencing children and to raising their self-esteem. It was essential that the overall curriculum and classroom practices converged towards the same aims. One or two isolated practices were not considered to be effective.

Constraints

Some of the practices such as the class council or certain PSCE activities were only successful when Mme Normand was the teacher conducting them. This appeared to be linked to a climate of trust which needed to be built up between the teacher and the children. Some of the children with difficulties regressed to their previous behaviours when Mme Normand was no longer present. This draws attention to the question of whether the positive outcomes linked to the PSCE practices are effective on a long term basis and underlines the importance of continuity, in terms of the teacher, with regards to such practices.

MME MALAVOY, L'ECOLE DU CENTRE

Contextual information

L'Ecole du Centre was located in a semi-rural wine-growing area with an essentially white middle-class population. The village in which l'Ecole du Centre was situated had formed a partnership with a neighbouring village in order to provide sufficient class sizes for each level and to avoid having an excess of multi-level classes. Children from both villages were grouped together by age to form a class in one of the schools in one of the villages. This meant that, at times, children were attending the school not located in their village and that from one year to the next children might be placed in a different classroom or in the other school. Some of the children in Mme Malvoy's classroom knew each other as they lived in the same village; others were unfamiliar to each other owing to the fact that they lived in different villages.

Prior to her teacher training, the class teacher, Mme Malavoy, had completed undergraduate and graduate studies in History. She had also worked as a guide in a French Resistance Museum and had often conducted visits for groups of children. This experience along with her passion for History contributed to her interest in developing meaningful ways of teaching History and Citizenship Education. She had been a teacher and head of l'Ecole du Centre for three years at the start of the project. Prior to working at l'Ecole du Centre, she had worked for 1 year in the southern part of Burgundy with a class of seven and eight year olds and then for 1 year in a school in Alsace with a class of nine and ten year olds where she had also taken on the position of head teacher.

Initial interview (September, 2007)

Educational beliefs

During her year at her previous school in the Alsace region, Mme Malavoy was introduced to various cooperative games through a conference on non-violent communication organised by the parents of the school. She decided to implement these activities in her classroom in that school once a week for a trimester. Although she had not implemented them at her current school in the previous year, she had a positive attitude and was eager to introduce them in her class and to participate in the research. Like Mme Normand, Mme Malavoy also planned to institute a class council and to implement her own PSCE practices in addition to those contained in the resource set provided as part of this research.

During the 2007-2008 school year she also prepared for and succeeded in passing the French competitive teacher trainer exam (CAFIPEMF). Part of the exam entailed preparing and carrying out an action research project which was written up as a reflective paper. Mme Malavoy's research topic focussed on promoting tolerance in children through various approaches to studying the Holocaust in her classroom. Her research questions were: '*How should we teach children about the Holocaust? Is it possible to teach something that is indescribable? Should we take the risk of transmitting a historical episode that could shock children and cause them to lose faith in humanity?*' As part of the exam she was also evaluated by a group of educators and inspectors several times throughout the year. This meant she had to be careful in the planning and implementing of the activities in her class so that they would meet the expectations of her trainers and inspectors and that she had to be prepared to justify her different pedagogical choices throughout the year.

Perception of self-esteem

Mme Malavoy described self-esteem in the following way:

Self-esteem is an image that a person has of himself. It is an image that a person has of himself but also the one he reflects back to others. So, it is when a person likes himself, if he likes himself physically, if he is comfortable talking to others.'

The development of self-esteem

Mme Malavoy felt that parents were the first influence on a child's self-esteem. She specifically spoke of the role that parents play in the formation of self-esteem through the way they reflect a child's image back to them and whether or not they show the child they are valued. She also mentioned the influence of a child's peers and of their teachers. She reported having seen children whom she felt were valued at home but who were somehow rejected by their peers and who even became scapegoats at school. She mentioned the teacher's influence on self-esteem several times and felt that the teacher played a significant role in the development of this in children.

The role of the teacher in the development of self-esteem

For Mme Malavoy one of the key roles of the teacher was to 'value' the child. This meant several things to her. First she highlighted that she felt that a teacher should not emphasise or draw undue attention to a child's weaknesses or areas in which they were struggling. This included paying close attention to all of the 'little words' and phrases a teacher might habitually use when addressing their students.

*When the child is having difficulties, it's important to not say things such as 'you **still** haven't understood?' those little words, those little words that we say like that. I get the feeling that those 'still's that we are unaware of are huge. You **still** haven't understood! I have to explain it to you **again!***

Mme Malavoy believed a teacher could influence a child's self-esteem by striving to treat all of the children equally, despite their different strong and weak points. This meant diminishing the children's mistakes or weak areas while drawing attention to their strong points. She often asked more able children to help other children with their work. This, she emphasised, needed to take place not only in traditionally valued academic areas such as Maths and French but also in areas where some children having difficulties in these academic subjects were more likely to succeed such as in Art or Science.

Looking beyond the traditionally valued academic skills

Mme Malavoy felt it was important to cultivate thinking skills and to give children the opportunity to express and share their ideas. This gave her an occasion to value certain children, especially those struggling with grammar and spelling, based on what they said in class.

It isn't just academic skills that count. It's a matter of what the children are worth, ... and the opinions they have on different subjects. That is why I discuss current events in class. When they are expressing their ideas I don't judge their spelling or their mistakes, I judge their ideas. Well, I don't judge their ideas, I mean that they can express their ideas and that's what intelligence is for me. It's not about knowing how to write well or being an ace at spelling, it's about being capable of thinking about a subject. It's showing that you are tolerant. So I value them for that in fact.

Practices positively influencing self-esteem: Past observations and plans for the school year

In reflecting on her practices which might have had a positive influence on children, Mme Malavoy spoke in general of how she tried to value the students every day and to make them feel important. In her eyes, each time she valued her students they responded by working hard and making the necessary effort. She also mentioned the importance of differentiation. She spoke of giving one boy in her class, who was having extreme difficulties, tests at a lower level to those which were given to the other students. Although the boy himself was unaware of this, Mme Malavoy had informed the parents of the situation. She had proceeded this way so that this child would not systematically have failing marks. It was more important for her to emphasise his successes. She also avoided giving children marks under passing level and instead would write on their paper a comment such as 'This was not fully understood - come see me to go over this some more'.

During the initial interview Mme Malavoy described her sense of personal responsibility for the children's ability or failure to learn.

Perhaps I didn't explain something the right way. So I tell them that. Even for an exam, if they don't have a good mark, I'll go over it again with them. Then I'll let them take the same exam over again and take the higher of the two marks.

Practices to be implemented

When asked which practices she planned to implement in the coming academic year to address the children's self-esteem, Mme Malavoy first cited the PSCE activities from the resource set provided which she called 'co-operative games'. She believed that these activities would be a continuation of her general pedagogical approach in that they would allow the children to express themselves and to learn to co-operate together. For Mme Malavoy PSCE practices included:

...all of the little activities that allow a child to express himself...not necessarily in Maths or French but rather it has to do with what a child is feeling. This is something

that is almost never done in school. I think it will be like the time when they explained their personal flags to the class and suddenly we had the opportunity to really enter their world and to get to know them better. We're not just talking about Maths and Grammar all of the time. I see it as a time when we will have the opportunity to know what they are going through at that moment. So, that's how I imagine it, they will be able to talk about themselves and about how they feel, what they are doing in life, who they are in fact, things they can't really do in other subjects.

In addition to the PSCE activities from the resource set, Mme Malavoy had planned to conduct lessons incorporating analysis and discussion of current events. This activity required the children to discuss a controversial news story, usually in the medium of a newspaper article. Children were asked to think about the situation and to express their ideas individually through a class discussion. The children then wrote their personal feelings with regard to the event in a current events notebook. The objective of the activity was simply to get them to think about different issues while at the same time guiding them towards the themes of respect, tolerance and civics. Mme Malavoy felt that the fact that the children were not assessed in relation to their reading and composition skills but rather on the ideas they expressed, gave all children a chance to succeed.

Responsibility in the classroom and links to self-esteem

Mme Malavoy underlined the important role the teacher plays in the lives of children. She believed that when a teacher shows trust in the children by giving them a specific responsibility, they feel important and want to be worthy of the task they have been given. She felt that it was essential for all of the children to have the opportunity to take on some kind of responsibility in the classroom. In addition to formal classroom duties or 'jobs' such as being responsible for the class council, distributing class folders and materials or taking care of the class pet, she encouraged responsibility in more informal ways. She mentioned often asking students to help each other. If certain students finished their work before others she would ask them to help the others. She also strove to instil attitudes of personal responsibility in the classroom.

I try to get them to understand why they learn in school. So we have a poster in the classroom 'Why learn?' [I tell them] It's not to make your parents happy. It's not to make the teacher happy. It's so that later on you can have a job that you've chosen and when the alarm goes off you say to yourself 'Ok, now I'm off to work' and not 'It can't be possible, it's already Monday!'

Mme Malavoy also made them responsible for their homework by not systematically checking to see if they had done it and by not punishing the children when the homework was not done. As she explained:

I try to tell them 'You didn't do your homework? Well I guess you didn't do your homework so perhaps the exam will be more difficult for you. That's too bad for you. I'll have one less assignment to correct.' I try to tell them 'I know the lesson, but the assignment was for you. If you didn't do it, it's a shame. Try to see if you can do it for tomorrow'. And usually it's done the next day. They have to more or less have the impression that they are the ones who are making the decision for themselves, that they are the ones who choose whether to do their work or not. The consequences are there in the end when they realise that it is for them after all.

Promoting tolerance and respect

She also mentioned trying to open their minds to the concepts of tolerance and respect. She often chose quotations linked to these themes on which she asked the children to reflect.

I try to instil in them a more tolerant vision of the world and I especially encourage them to not judge others. I talk about people who are unemployed and emphasise that it's not their fault. We talk about people who are poor, some children thought that it was their fault and that you were just born that way. So I think that the more they are aware of things the more they will be able to think about things and not immediately judge others.'

Mid Year (February, 2008)

Reflections on practices, possible influences on children's self-esteem

In reflecting on her practices up to the mid-year point, Mme Malavoy first spoke of the positive influence of the PSCE practices from the resource set which encouraged co-operation between children. She felt that these activities helped build group spirit in the class and instilled a sense of respect between students. By mid-year none of the children refused to include a child in their group or to be in a group with others. Mme Malavoy attributed this to the fact that the activities had allowed all of the children to be mixed together and to come into contact with their different classmates at some point during the trimester. She also emphasised the impact of the co-operative activities.

Where I really see results is when they really have to co-operate with each other in order to achieve something. They really have an impact on the children. It is contrary to all of the games where it's every man for himself. In these activities they are united together towards the same cause, the same goal. I hear them laughing together. When

we discuss the activity afterwards, 'what was good about this activity?', 'what happened?', what keeps coming up is 'we were able to help each other' I see that this contributed to a good atmosphere in the class and that none of the children are left out. Everyone is included.

A second type of activity which had an impact on the children were the activities where they had to share information about themselves with other children in the class ('moving circles', Philosophy for Children) These activities allowed them to discover that they all had things in common with each other. In addition to this they were able to learn important information about others which led to greater understanding among them.

During one exchange they had to discuss the question 'what are you most afraid of?'. It was quite something because in the end you see that Maud, for example, spoke about the death of her aunt to children who didn't know about that. It allowed them, perhaps, to better understand the fairly complex personality of this girl...what she was going through at the moment, and that it's not easy for her and as a result it shows in her behaviour. Afterwards they had another view of her. And they saw that someone like Bastien who seems so intellectual, has the same fears as everyone else in the end. I find it creates a sort of uniformity. They realise that others have the same fears and the same desires. And at the same time, they are still different, unique.

Mme Malavoy also commented on the effectiveness of activities which involved self-expression through movement ('musical circles', 'silent greetings', 'tangles'). These activities allowed children to gain awareness of their bodies without the self-consciousness that can be present for some children. This was also linked to the group spirit that was present during these activities which Mme Malavoy felt was 'free of judgement'

Links across the curriculum

Mme Malavoy also spoke of her project on the Holocaust where they were studying difference and the consequences of intolerance. She felt that this allowed them to put into words what they were learning through the PSCE activities. She considered aspects of this historical work as being linked to citizenship education in its broadest sense and felt that it enabled the children to build on their understanding of tolerance by relating this to a new context.

What we worked on concerning the Holocaust really helped them make progress. Perhaps it enabled us to translate attitudes into words. In the PSCE activities there aren't necessarily words. There are attitudes, things they are doing. During these lessons (part of citizenship education) they were able to put this into words: racism, intolerance, respect etc....

The role of the teacher

Mme Malavoy highlighted the teacher's role in the planning and evaluation stages of the activities. She commented particularly on the care needed when selecting children for group work, in order to ensure certain children would not always be together. After groups were formed and instructions given she felt that the teacher needed to step back and let the children carry on by themselves without intervening, but highlighted the need to have a plenary session after the activities to summarise what had happened.

It's especially important to go back and analyse the activity with the students: 'What happened? How did you feel? Why?' As a result they put things into words as well. Otherwise they get the impression that it's just a game but it's important to get them to say ... 'I spoke with so and so and I didn't know that... I really got to know him, I'm less afraid of him.' And it comes back to the lesson on citizenship, there's a link to what we're doing in class.

Mme Malavoy pointed to the importance of spending sufficient time on the activities in order to fully benefit from them. She specifically mentioned the 'personal flag activity' which she felt she should have spent more time on.

After the activity I distributed their flags quickly. They had really spent time making them, they were really well done. And in the end, they had rapidly presented them to the class. There was no work done with them. I think you really have to go deeper into the activity. And during the feedback stage I get the impression that I don't go deep enough into the issues.... For my part I don't think I planned out progression enough, I didn't analyse enough after each activity.

Reflections on difficulties

Mme Malavoy admitted that when she was short on time, when the lesson preceding the PSCE activities took longer than expected, sometimes the PSCE lesson was either shortened or omitted. One solution she felt was to shorten the time set aside for the PSCE activities to 20 minutes and to implement them regularly once a week. She also acknowledged she did not always take the time to familiarise herself sufficiently with some of the activities and had not 'measured the impact' the activities would have on the children. It was for this reason she felt that in the future it would be helpful to repeat the same activity several times so that the children and the teacher would have the time to be comfortable with it and to get the most out of it.

Activities having an influence on self-esteem

Many parents of the focus children mentioned practices Mme Malavoy used to motivate the students, give them a feeling of success and to encourage them. For example, it was reported that she regularly wrote personalised comments in the children's notebooks which the parents were able to consult and which they felt had a very positive influence on their child's self esteem as these comments valued personal aspects of a child's work or personality and seemed to demonstrate care, empathy and encouragement. Parents also referred to personalised desk mats, an 'around the world trip' activity, and bimonthly self-evaluations. Mme Malavoy explained in detail the classroom practices referred to by the parents and how she felt they contributed to children's self-esteem.

Personalised desk mats

The personalised desk mats consisted of A3 size papers on which the class timetable and a picture of the child were fixed. The mats were laminated and kept on each child's desk through out the year. Mme Malavoy described these mats as a way for each child to express his or her personality.

Often I find that in a class we concentrate on 'The Class'. And in fact each personality is unique and if you take one away, the class is no longer the same. I think it's important to consider the child as a child and not just as part of the group or the class. It's important to let him have his own identity, to let him have his place in the class...Here, the desk mats were a way of showing them their place in the classroom. They aren't just lost in a mass of children.

'Trip around the world' reward system

Mme Malavoy also created a unique reward system called 'trip around the world.' She used it as a means of valuing a child's work without giving them a mark. At the end of each week, when the children had made an effort in their work, when they had paid attention to their writing and or they had participated sufficiently Madame Malavoy would give each child one, two or three points. Each point represented a country on the map of the world. The map contained different itineraries composed of 26 countries. According to the number of points a child had, they would move their marker from one country to the next. The country they remained on and its capital would be noted on a tracking sheet. At the end of an itinerary, the child would receive a small prize such as a book or chocolate.

Bi-monthly self-evaluations

Once every two weeks Mme Malavoy asked the children to evaluate themselves with reference to their work and their behaviour. For each item the children awarded themselves the mark they thought they deserved and the mark they felt the teacher would give. They also had to choose an area where they felt they needed to improve. After discussion with the teacher, they then signed the evaluation sheet. Parents were required to sign it, too. Mme Malavoy felt this was an important tool in encouraging the children to reflect on their work throughout the year. It also gave them the chance to improve certain areas before the final school report.

It's really interesting to see the marks that they give themselves. It makes them think: did I make enough effort? Did I listen well? Did I respect my classmates? It's important to know what they think of themselves, how they see themselves. And it's also important to remind them what the teacher expects of them. ... The objective is that they themselves think about their work and for them to know exactly what I expect of them so they are not surprised when their final reports come.

Personalised comments in notebooks

Mme Malavoy regularly put personalised comments in the children's workbooks to praise or encourage them. She also added little drawings and used affectionate nicknames.

I work a lot on an emotional level. Maybe it's a mistake because I don't know if that's good or not. But that's how I am. I might put a little comment like 'Hello sweetheart'. It can be something fairly affectionate for some children when I feel like they need that. For others I do it less. For Bastien, I wouldn't put something like that. But for children like Lilly, who need a lot of..., like Megan, I can put: 'way to go honey! Congratulations.

Reflection on themes from initial interview

Teaching children responsibility

In the initial interview, Mme Malavoy had spoken of the importance of helping children to become more responsible. She emphasised the notion of trust and the steps the children have to take to understand their responsibilities. She allowed her students a large amount of freedom ranging from whether they did their homework or not, to going to the library by themselves, to working out their room arrangement during their class trip. She mentioned that most of the children could handle this much responsibility but that some children were unable to manage the large amount of freedom she gave them, requiring her to intervene:

For example, I told them that they should learn their lessons and do their homework for themselves and not for me nor for their parents. In the beginning, in September, the next day they came back to school, and nobody had done their homework and they said 'we don't really care'! It was awful! And little by little I was able to get the message across.

Mme Malavoy believed the children took their classroom responsibilities very seriously. She reported that they waited impatiently to see which responsibility they would be assigned. They also invented other responsibilities in areas they felt there was a need. These class responsibilities were distributed by the president of the class council every two weeks. The roles of president and secretary of the class council were responsibilities assigned by the teacher. The children holding these positions usually took their role seriously. Part of their role was to distribute responsibilities according to the children's behaviour in the class.

Current Events Folder

One way Mme Malavoy felt she promoted children's responsibility in the classroom was through her commitment to raising their awareness of wider global issues via weekly 'current events' sessions. Each child in the class had a special personalised 'current events folder' an activity which she had devised herself as part of her educational beliefs on the importance of fostering tolerance and respect. The children were given an article on a weekly basis which they were to read, summarise and comment on. At the mid-year point Mme Malavoy felt that they had made significant progress in their understanding of events and were beginning to share this with others. Her intentions were that this would raise their awareness of their own personal influence on events within a larger context and in turn contribute to a change in their attitudes and behaviours.

I really hope that by showing them through the news all of the people who are oppressed and who suffer they realise that it's due to help from others that we are able to get by in life ...if there's help around us.

Part of their assignment was to make suggestions on how to improve the current situation. Mme Malavoy felt that this was an essential part of the activity and that it helped them become actors in the world, thus linking directly to citizenship education. Once the assignments were completed there was a general discussion in class. Concerning an incident where a boy had been expelled from a nearby school, some children suggested the child be put in prison while others reacted and tried to see things from the expelled boy's point of

view. Mme Malavoy stressed that often during these discussions there were links made between the current events, their lesson on the Holocaust and the life of their classroom.

In the end, through our discussion on Ingrid Betancourt or Tibet, surprisingly it is possible to get them to think about the class, about the atmosphere in the class and how certain children were having a difficult time in the class.'

Valuing children

Mme Malavoy identified several children who had gained in confidence in the class. She believed that through openly valuing these children, by calling on them and taking interest in them, she helped them feel accepted and take their place in the classroom. While some children had shown signs of increasing confidence, however, others remained fairly reserved and withdrawn. She was unable to account for this but suggested individual personality could be a factor. She did not refer to family or other factors.

Final interview (June, 2008)

Mme Malavoy identified two types of activities from the resource set which she felt had worked particularly well: those in which the children needed to co-operate with each other; those in which they were able to express and share information about themselves. Among the games which promoted co-operation were: 'hands and feet', 'forms and letters' and 'musical circles'. These activities encouraged the children to help and support each other and led to a positive group spirit. They also promoted listening skills as they had to first listen to the others and come to an agreement in order to succeed at their task.

There was really a lot of help between them. No one was uncomfortable and they were really motivated. It was fun and at the same time they had to cooperate. They couldn't just go off in a corner and do their own thing otherwise the group would lose. ...They had to cooperate even if they didn't necessarily get along with some of the other children.

The activities which enabled children to express and share information about themselves included: the 'moving circles' activity, from the resource pack, as well as the class council and Philosophy for Children which the teacher introduced on her own. During the 'moving circles' activity the children were able to discuss personal feelings with each other. This was due to the fact that during this activity they were set up in pairs.

Sometimes there are children who won't take the risk of speaking. Here, they were in a two-way relationship and everyone was talking. Each time they weren't necessarily with their friends, and I saw children who didn't talk much to each other outside of class...

open up easily. That's also a positive point. No one ever asks them those things in class. It's a moment when they can finally talk about themselves.

Philosophy for Children

Mme Malavoy had not previously conducted Philosophy for Children (P4C) in any of her classes but, building on her educational beliefs of encouraging children's thinking skills and in relationship to the other PSCE activities in the resource set, she decided to introduce a Philosophy for Children session once a week in this academic year. These sessions lasted approximately 30 minutes. Each session began by Mme Malavoy reading a story or newspaper article after which she would state the main topic which would be discussed during the session. The sessions revolved around themes such as equality, progress, the disabled or obedience and often began with a question such as 'Are all human beings born equal?', 'Is life better today than it was in the past?' 'Should we always obey?' Children were encouraged to consider different aspects of the themes and to engage in a debate around the different viewpoints expressed. She had been impressed by the children's level of argument and noticed that some children had gained in confidence throughout the year as a result of their discussions during this time. These children, who were hesitant to speak in front of the class in the beginning of the year, were now willing to participate in discussions. She mentioned one boy who was very quiet at the beginning of the year but had become the president of the class council by the end of the year. Mme Malavoy stressed that P4C provided an opportunity for children who were struggling in traditional curriculum areas to contribute effectively and be valued for their participation. In addition to this she felt that the P4C provided many opportunities to make links to other areas of the PSCE curriculum.

Mme Malavoy believed P4C was also a useful tool in developing the children's listening skills. Although not all children had the opportunity to express their ideas each time, listening to others helped them to advance in their thinking and to make progress in their ability to think critically. Mme Malavoy felt that through the P4C lessons children had gained an awareness that issues are often complex and that these lessons had helped them better understand the need to reflect before taking a particular stance. She believed the activities developed tolerance and greater acceptance of diversity and reported that some children who had displayed racist tendencies at the beginning of the year appeared to become some of the most tolerant children in the class. She did admit, however, that there was one child who did not seem to have been influenced by the P4C lessons. This child did not seem to understand

the concepts being discussed and tended to blurt out comments unrelated to the topic or to simply repeat what had previously been said.

Class Council

Mme Malavoy spoke of the class council as a 'highly beneficial time' in which 'each child is allowed to express himself'. She felt this should be a common practice in all classrooms as she said she had often witnessed children who 'suffered' because they were denied the right to voice their feelings.

I think it should be mandatory in all classrooms. In some classes where there is no class council I see children who are suffering because they can't express themselves. I see it in the playground. Christine (another teacher in the school) told me 'I don't have time for a class council' which I understand. And things were difficult in her class but I felt like the children had so many things to say!

She mentioned that many teachers do not practise class councils because they feel they do not have enough time. She pointed out that the class councils in her classroom had taken up a long time at the beginning of the year but that she had managed to streamline them so that only the important issues were addressed. For a while she had worried that perhaps the children were not learning anything during that time but she had subsequently discovered that it was an important part of the week for them as they often asked when the next class council would take place. She felt that it had helped the children to feel better as they were able to find solutions to matters concerning them and that the council had taught them how to express themselves and to take responsibility for themselves.

She did express concern about the impact of the class council on some children and stressed the need for clear rules and the intervention of an adult.

At times some children are attacked. It's often very disturbing because suddenly it stigmatises the child. You don't really know if what is written on the 'criticism slip' (slip of paper where children can 'criticise' another child for their behaviour or a particular action) is true or not. It always makes me feel a little uneasy. It's always a friendly moment I find and then wham... in front of everybody, the child is exposed... 'I did this and you did that, why did you do that? I find it is a bit rough. ... What bothers me is that I don't know what is true and what is false. I have noticed that when a child says 'I want to criticise Thiebaut because he often hurts me', it suffices to say 'Thiebaut, you must now make an effort to not hurt others in the future'. I think that that is enough. ... An adult has said something about it and that is enough. ... The problem is that at times it always falls on certain children who are not necessarily the most difficult ones.

Overall perception and evaluation of PSCE activities

Mme Malavoy highlighted many positive outcomes linked to the PSCE practices which had been implemented throughout the year. These included: the possibility for her to recognise the children as individuals; to provide a sense of group unity and belonging in the classroom; and to enable them to learn and make links between various areas of the curriculum. She felt that the PSCE activities gave her the opportunity to see the children as individuals and not just as students:

It gave me the chance to know them better so that they're not simply a bunch of names and marks. [It helped me] to know what they were thinking, if they were suffering, if they felt at ease or not and why.

She also believed the activities had helped to develop a feeling of group cohesion. The children were able to get to know themselves better and were given the opportunity to get to know the others in the class in a more personal way. This feeling of group unity was also linked to an increase in tolerance on the part of the children:

They become more tolerant of the others because they know them better.

Mme Malavoy felt they learned a great deal during the PSCE activities and that they were often able to make links across the curriculum and see the meaning and value of what they were learning :

Even if they are only co-operative games, it seems like it's not very serious, just a lot of fun but they really learn a lot of things. And even during the debates or when we're discussing something horrible- like when we discussed the Holocaust, you can't find any worse topic- you can still see that these are fantastic moments to experience with them, because they give their opinions about the topic, we advance together, we think about it. Everything is linked together and everything has meaning. When you are able to give meaning to everything and when there's a class dynamic through the co-operative games and mutual help... in History we see this and in Geography we see rich countries and poor countries, everything is linked to something else and the children don't wonder why they come to school because they know why.

Practices encouraging responsibility and influences on the children's self-esteem

Overall Mme Malavoy tried to help the children become more responsible by treating them as she would treat adults. This meant demonstrating a large amount of trust in them. She felt it was not appropriate to constantly check up on the children and punish them all of the time but

rather to teach them the natural consequences of their behaviour. In allowing them a certain amount of freedom she felt that they learned to be responsible for themselves:

I never scold them if they forget their book, and for them it's the first time that's ever happened. Usually they get told off ...I treat them, well, not like adults but almost. ... They appreciate when someone says 'it's not easy being a child, I know, it's hard and you have the right to forget things just like I forget things.' I tell them 'I don't expect you to be perfect, because I'm not perfect either'. It's important for them.

Mme Malavoy also felt that giving the children 'adult' tasks in class, such as helping her photocopy materials or using her own materials in class, helped them to feel capable of something other than completing their basic school work. It was a way of valuing them and consequently contributed to greater self-esteem.

Evolving definition of self-esteem

Mme Malavoy's definition of self-esteem at the close of the study was the following:

It's the way we see ourselves. It's the opinion we have of ourselves and the one we think others have of us. Perhaps they go together. Perhaps the opinion we have of ourselves is combined with what others think of us. We can have a good opinion of ourselves but if others reject us, it can change... I think the two are strongly linked. There is one that we can control more or less and the other not at all.

In the first interview, Mme Malavoy had referred to the image an individual reflects back to others as an important aspect of self-esteem. In the final interview she had a different vision of this 'reflected image':

The image which we reflect to others... not necessarily solely what we reflect back to others but the one that others have of us, without having even reflected one back ... Perhaps we reflect one to them but they already have their own judgement. I think that others are even more important. I realised this year that children can not have high self-esteem unless others validate it. It is always a bit shaken if others don't like us and if we don't have a good status in the class. ... Others have a very important place in the shaping of our self-esteem.

Mme Malavoy noticed that in her classroom the children who had high self-esteem were the ones who had central places/roles in the class and were the children everybody liked. She felt it was a teacher's duty to strive to help all of the children to feel confident and to succeed :

Otherwise, certain children lose confidence in themselves and you can see it in certain cases this year where their school results were affected. All at once, some children can find themselves failing. That is proof for those who say that self-esteem has nothing to do with learning.

However one may need to exercise a degree of caution when interpreting Mme Malavoy's comments as the question of whether high self-esteem is a cause or a consequence of peer acceptance has been raised by various authors (Ladd, 2005; Emler, 2001). It is notoriously difficult to unpick where the influence of peer acceptance and high peer status and high self-esteem begin and end. It is more likely that these two concepts feed into each other to reinforce each in one direction or another.

Insights gained and implications for future practice

The important elements which emerge through the interviews with Mme Malavoy revolve around the role played by the PSCE activities in the fostering of self-expression, thinking skills and group unity. The PSCE activities allowed the children and the teacher the opportunity to get to know each other in a deeper way which seemed to build understanding and tolerance between them. This also allowed the teacher an opportunity to see them as individuals. The activities were also a means of further developing their thinking skills and enriching their learning experiences by providing opportunities to make links throughout the curriculum. The PSCE activities contributed to a sense of class cohesion and co-operation between students.

The data from the interviews with Mme Malavoy point to the necessity of carefully planning the activities and taking the time to go deeper into them by spending more time discussing the activities afterward with the children. The importance of this evaluation stage was emphasised and described as the time in which the children could put their experience into words giving meaning to the whole process.

Mme Malavoy's final observation regarding the role that peers play in the evolution of children's self-esteem was highly informative. She highlighted the difficulty of maintaining a positive sense of self if this self-image is not validated by the significant others in the group. She also points to her own observations concerning the link between a student's self-esteem and their behaviour and performance in the classroom, stressing that these are strongly interwoven.

Limitations

This final comment also sheds light on what could be seen as the limitations of the positive influences of PSCE practices. Although she mentioned the benefits of such practices for all of the children and pointed to the sense of class unity and the attitude of respect and tolerance which reigned in the classroom, one particular child, Megane, regularly encountered situations of rejection and conflict with several others girls in the class. Mme Malavoy felt strongly that these experiences negatively influenced Megan's self-esteem despite her own efforts to reinforce a positive sense of self-esteem. This raises questions concerning the influence of PSCE practices in the context of different variables present in the classroom and outside of the classroom.

DISCUSSION

Differences in approach

The semi-structured interviews with Mme Normand and Mme Malavoy provide evidence of the way in which a teacher's values and beliefs influence their practice. Mme Normand worked within the framework of Institutional Pedagogy which emphasises the important role of 'the group' and relies heavily on techniques of group intervention (Bertrand, 2003). Throughout these practices the group of children which make up the class exert a positive and formative influence on each other in that they help each other to take responsibility for their behaviour and for their learning. For example, during the class council children may provide feedback for their classmates in the form of *critiques* (criticism) or *félicitations* (praise) which allows children to become aware of the effect of their behaviour on others. They also participate in helping to generate solutions for some children experiencing difficulties and often provide support for these children. Other practices linked to Institutional Pedagogy, such as the individual contracts issued during the class council or the behaviour belts also depend on feedback from the group. Children are given specific objectives towards which to work and on which the other children in the class provided feedback at a later date. Mme Normand felt that these combined practices helped children to make progress on personal and academic levels.

Mme Malavoy's underpinning beliefs were also evident in her practice. Her experience as a guide in a museum dedicated to the Resistance movement during WWII, and her family's personal experience during the war had strongly influenced her beliefs which could be seen in

her dedication to promoting critical thinking skills and tolerance in her classroom. In contrast to Mme Normand, Mme Malavoy spoke more often of 'differences' in children and referred to the children as 'individuals' with 'separate identities'. Their bi-monthly self-evaluations were not conducted in front of the class but were carried out individually and privately discussed with the teacher. In addition to this she made a point of personalising her comments on children's work according to their individual personalities and was interested in getting to know the children on a deeper individual level. Mme Malavoy often commented on her practice of 'valuing' children individually which she felt had helped contribute to the development of their self-esteem. Whereas Mme Normand used children's mistakes or weaknesses as a starting point from which children could make progress, Mme Malavoy endeavoured to take the focus off such weaknesses and to concentrate on the child's strengths.

Despite these differences, and the teachers' different choices in the implementation of the PSCE practices, each teacher seemed to echo the other when discussing the positive outcomes for the children. Specific examples showed that activities such as 'hands and feet', 'forms and letters' and 'musical circles' in Mme Malavoy's class and 'touch something...' and 'comfortable Coco' in Mme Normand's class gave the children an opportunity to come into contact with each other and to cooperate. Through these activities the children were able to 'hold hands,' 'carry each other on their backs' and 'sit on each other's laps' without any apparent negative reactions such as judgement, criticism or rejection from the other children. In this way the class teachers felt the children had been able to experience contact with others in a positive, non-aggressive way.

Increased acceptance and peer support

In addition to highlighting the ways in which the PSCE activities helped the children to come into contact with one another, Mme Malavoy and Mme Normand also pointed to the improved class cohesion, acceptance and unity which resulted from the activities and felt that they had helped to break down barriers between children and to dissipate fears. Both teachers mentioned that children were able to work better together and that incidents involving rejection of certain children had decreased. For example, during one of the PSCE activities Mme Normand had used Bryce's (a child who had been a victim of peer rejection) scarf to blindfold the other children. Whereas previously this might have provoked negative reactions from the other children, in the context of the PSCE games there were no visible signs of

rejection or refusal on the part of the other children. Mme Normand also pointed out that through learning to come into contact with the other children in a non-aggressive way, Jerome, another child who had a history of being rejected, had practically ceased his previously aggressive behaviour towards the other children and had actually made close friends with some of the children who had refused to play with him at the beginning of the year. Mme Malavoy pointed to the context of the PSCE activities as a 'special area where children can be free of judgement' and 'where all students can mix together regardless of their status'. She felt that this context allowed Mégane, a girl who had been rejected by a group of girls and who was experiencing a great deal of conflict with one of these girls, to reintegrate the group and to make steps to being accepted by the others in the class at a moment when the class atmosphere was heavily emotionally charged. This is an important finding as gaining increased support from peers has been cited as being a crucial element in the development of children's self-esteem (Harter, 1999; Humphrey, 2003).

Importance of planning, integrating PSCE activities and making links

There is also strong evidence of the importance of integrating the PSCE activities within the wider curriculum and general pedagogy so that the activities are not isolated from the rest of the curriculum, rather, that they serve as a springboard between subject areas and real life experience. Both teachers felt it was necessary to make links throughout the curriculum and to take the time to help children to become aware of the deeper meaning of the activities. For example, Mme Normand felt that the children had made progress when they had started to apply what they had learned and had been practicing during the PSCE activities to real life situations. Mme Malavoy equally stressed the need for reflection and planning of the activities in order to 'go deeper' into them so that they would be meaningful for the children. This led the teachers to reflect on the importance of careful and purposeful planning of the PSCE activities and of spending adequate time exploring issues within the activities in order for children to benefit fully from them.

Providing opportunities for self-expression

Both teachers highlighted the lack of opportunities for self-expression that exist within the traditional curriculum and pointed to the space created for self-expression through the PSCE activities. Specific activities such as 'moving circles' and Philosophy for Children in Mme Malavoy's class and the 'quoi de neuf' and 'class council' in Mme Normand's class were

seen to provide such opportunities whilst the ‘feelings sculptures’ (Mme Malavoy’s class) and the ‘hunt the pair’ activity (Mme Normand’s class) were less successful. With the former activities, the teachers saw them as a means for the children to be listened to and to feel valued which are often overlooked in the day to day rush to get through the curriculum. The latter activities were either too difficult (representing an emotion through a clay sculpture) or too simple (finding a matching partner in a set according to a picture) which reduced the amount of communication and expression required. This aspect of self expression has been highlighted previously in Taylor’s (2006) study conducted on circle time practices which confirmed that circle time activities had encouraged children to express themselves more freely, and that this practice was helpful, in particular to children who did not usually participate in class.

Developing self-esteem

It has been advocated in the literature that increasing the amount of support children receive from their peers could be effective in raising children’s self-esteem (Emler, 2001; Fox and Boulton, 2003; Harter, 1999; Humphrey, 2004). As mentioned above, both teachers made efforts to increase peer support through the use of their various PSCE practices. Many of the activities implemented by the teachers in the study focussed on helping children come into physical contact with one another, while others allowed children the opportunity to get to know each other and build feelings of unity through mutual co-operation. There is evidence in these case studies that such activities increased the amount of support children received from their peers. In addition to this, the teachers’ concern with developing responsibility and helping children to be accountable for their behaviour and their learning involved processes which seemed to contribute to increased self-efficacy among the children. The literature on self-efficacy highlights the possibility for children to develop a more positive sense of self by allowing them to experience success in various areas (Bandura, 1997; Burns, 1982). In referring to research done in this area, Mruk (1999) emphasises that :

When we reach a goal that requires dealing effectively with problems or obstacles that also have personal significance, then we demonstrate a higher level of competence at dealing with the challenges of living than we have known before. Such successes represent a developmental achievement in the person’s own maturation. (p. 85)

This appeared to be the case in these classrooms with regards to the class contracts and behaviours belts in Mme Normand’s classroom and the responsible environment (holding

children responsible for their work, individual goal-setting) created in Mme Malavoy's classroom.

However, there appear to be limits to the influence of PSCE practices on some children's self-esteem due to the different variables involved in the development and stability of this construct. The two teachers repeatedly refer to the positive outcomes the PSCE activities had on some children who had been experiencing rejection within the class. They noticed that these children were experiencing less rejection and had gradually become more accepted and integrated into the group. However, they also spoke of the limits to this acceptance which seem to be linked to different variables. Mme Normand spoke of Bryce, for example, who had made a great deal of progress with regards to his behaviour in class and who was no longer openly mocked or rejected. Yet, she also mentioned his recurrent lack of social skills which might have been necessary for him to develop and maintain friendships. Mme Malavoy described a similar situation with Mégane who had also experienced incidents of rejection by peers. Acceptance by her peers had greatly increased during the school year for Mégane but, for reasons the teacher was unaware of, support from peers decreased towards the end of the year. This eventually led to a more intense perception of rejection on the part of Mégane.

These examples illuminate the role played by other variables, such as family background, social skills and cognitive determinants in the development of self-esteem and highlight the need to consider other areas of classroom practice which are influential in increasing self-esteem. Much of the research on peer relations and social competence suggests that parental involvement and intervention with children strongly influence the degree of social skills a child may acquire (Ladd, 2005).

Certain children in the case studies were thought to be making progress and showing signs of improved self-esteem but apparently needed support on other levels in order to continue to make progress. The fluctuating nature of self-esteem has been previously highlighted in the literature (Burns, 1982; Harter, Water & Whitesell, 1998; Kernis, 1993) especially during childhood when it is thought to be less stable than in adulthood. It therefore appears crucial to provide continuous support for children in order to sustain any positive outcomes. In this context, attention to the areas of attribution theory and social skills training were shown to be crucial to the development of self-esteem. One possibility for continuity in this area is the domain of cognitive behavioural therapy in which children learn to identify the very thoughts and behaviours which act as barriers to their progress with regard to positive self-regard.

Another key finding has been the importance of ensuring continuity in the adult implementing and managing PSCE practices in the classroom. This seems to be linked to the amount of trust children have in the adult leading the activities and to the relationship that has been constructed between the children and that adult. The interview data revealed the lack of success of certain PSCE activities when the main teacher was not conducting them and indicates the importance of continuity in the person conducting the PSCE activities.

An important element which arose was the occasional practice of shortening or omitting PSCE activities on days where the teachers were short on time. This highlights the difficulty for teachers of prioritising such activities perhaps due to the fact that they are non statutory and are not formally assessed. In one study (Taylor, 2005) some teachers were reported as implementing circle time primarily on a 'spontaneous' basis essentially in order to manage behaviour problems. Taylor also reported that some teachers were inclined to reduce the time allotted to circle time if they were hard pressed. It is important to draw attention to this issue given that, despite pressure to reach curriculum objectives and pressures due to lack of time, both of the teachers in this study felt the activities were worth the extra time commitment and effort due to the fact that the children felt better about themselves and communicated and worked together more efficiently. This, in the long run, they felt, saved time and created a better atmosphere for learning. The importance of regular slots on the timetable for PSCE and with sufficient time allocated, is thus another finding of this study.

This chapter detailed the understanding and practices of two teachers who were committed to taking part in this research by virtue of their underlying beliefs and who nonetheless found difficulties and challenges. The results would inevitably have been very different for novice teachers or teachers who were unsympathetic to this way of working. This thus raises questions about training and education in the area of PSCE, which will be discussed further in the final chapter.

This chapter has aimed to highlight the perceptions of the two class teachers in the study with regards to their implementation of various PSCE practices throughout the school year. It also examined the teachers' perceptions of possible influences of the PSCE activities on the children's self-esteem and on the classroom environment in general. The following chapter focuses on the children in the case study classrooms as a whole. The first part of the chapter presents and discusses the data obtained from the self-esteem questionnaire from the four

classrooms at the beginning and end of the year whilst the second part examines the children's perceptions of the PSCE activities in the two intervention classrooms obtained through the mid-year focus group interviews and the individual end of year interviews conducted with the focus children.

CHAPTER 6: CHILDREN IN THE CLASSROOM : AN OVERALL PERSPECTIVE ON PSCE AND SELF-ESTEEM

In this chapter the focus shifts from the teachers to the children. It begins at the whole class level presenting and discussing the implications of the self-esteem questionnaires completed by all students in the two case study classrooms and the two control classrooms. It then, through the use of focus group data, examines the case study classes' children's perceptions of the PSCE activities they experienced over the year. In the final section, the focus is on individual children and in-depth case studies of six of the twelve focus children are presented. These case studies provide the opportunity for a detailed examination of the factors influencing these children's levels of self-esteem.

WHOLE CLASS SELF-ESTEEM QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEYS

As described in detail in Chapter 3, self-esteem questionnaires were administered to students in the four classrooms in this study at the beginning of the autumn term and at the end of the summer term in order to observe the evolution of the case study groups and to compare results between groups over the course of a school year.

The data from the questionnaires were analysed using the software programme SPSS. Repeated measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to determine the main effect of time on the two groups (case study group and control group) and to determine the main effect of time between the two groups and between male students and female students. The ANOVAs were carried out on the children's overall questionnaire scores and on the various subscales identified within the questionnaire as indicated in the BSS. The subscales were defined as follows: Subscale 1: Self esteem, Subscale 2: Physical appearance self-concept, Subscale 3: Physical abilities self-concept, Subscale 4: Reading comprehension self-concept, Subscale 5: Maths self-concept, Subscale 6: Learning self-concept, Subscale 7: Relations with peers, Subscale 8: Relations with father, Subscale 9: Relations with mother.

The analysis found no significant difference overall in children's self-esteem scores in the four classrooms between the autumn and summer questionnaires and no significant difference was shown between the control classes and the case study classes on the general self-esteem

scale. Overall, no differences were shown between the control classes and the case-study classes, with the exception of the scores for the learning self-concept subscale in which the case study classes showed a slight decrease in mean score from autumn to summer than the control classes. There did, however, appear to be some differences in relation to gender. There was a greater increase for girls in mean score between autumn and summer on the self-esteem subscale [$F(1, 75) = 5.036, p < .05$] and physical appearance subscale [$F(1, 74) = 7.419, p < .05$]. The mean score for boys in the four classes showed a slight significant decrease on the physical appearance subscale [$F(1, 74) = 7.419, p < .05$] and a decrease in mean scores between autumn and summer on the reading comprehension subscale [$F(1, 77) = 6.041, p < .05$].

This type of finding has also been seen in previous studies of self-esteem (Millar & Moran, 2007; Galbraith & Alexander, 2005; Trickey and Topping, 2006). Several hypotheses have been put forward with regard to this difference in results according to gender. One hypothesis is that female teachers have a greater positive influence on female students than on male students (Millar & Moran, 2007). Millar and Moran also suggest that the differences in girls' and boys' goal orientations may influence the way in which certain PSCE activities influenced them. Having found greater significant increases in results for girls than for boys in their study on Philosophy for Children, Trickey and Topping (2006) suggest that activities which foster collaborative discussion might provide a context in which girls are supported and encouraged to take more risks.

With regards to the general self-esteem scale, there may be various reasons why no significant differences appeared in the questionnaire results. Firstly, self-esteem is thought to be a construct which is developed over time and which therefore may not be susceptible to significant changes over shorter periods of time. Harter (1999) emphasises that as children advance toward middle childhood certain negative self-evaluations may take on an automatic structure which may then cause self-esteem to become increasingly resistant to change. In addition, Harter emphasises that children's increasing ability to make both positive and negative self-evaluations and their growing tendency to rely on social comparisons as a standard measure of their worth can contribute to a slight decrease in children's self-esteem as they mature.

The difficulty in accurately measuring self-esteem, previously highlighted in the literature, may have also played a role (Emler, 2001; Mruk, 1999). Emler underlines the problems faced

when measuring a concept which, in its definition, has been likened to an attitude or an emotion. He suggests that given that the stability of self-esteem can fluctuate from one individual to the next over a period of time this raises questions as to the accuracy of any one instrument used to measure the concept. This effect may have been compounded by an insufficient sample size. Although the sample in the study was sufficiently large enough to apply statistical tests, the fact that it was not a larger sample may have reduced the possibility of finding a significant difference in children's self-esteem over time.

Given the results of the questionnaire, it is also necessary to consider the possibility that the implementation of the PSCE practices did not have a significant direct effect on the children's self-esteem. This could be linked to several factors. One possibility would be that among the children in the four classes there may have been external variables which were too great for any positive changes to take place. Another possibility, as aforementioned, is that there was not a sufficient amount of time for positive changes to be shown as significant. There is evidence, however, as indicated through the interviews with the teachers, the focus children and the parents and carers of the focus children that the PSCE activities perhaps served as a base for the development of positive self-esteem over time. As previously highlighted, the importance for children to feel accepted by their peers and to feel valued in various domains the classroom has been shown to be an essential aspect of the development of positive self-esteem. Despite the lack of evidence of significant differences overall in children's self-esteem from September to June as seen through the analysis of the questionnaire scores, some interesting differences can be seen in the case studies as shown in the previous chapter. This could also be related to the type of statistical analysis used, which was based on means, which may have hidden individual increases and decreases accounting for the differences found in relation to the case study children.

FOCUS GROUPS' PERCEPTIONS OF PSCE PRACTICES

The interviews conducted with the focus children in each of the case study schools mid-year and at the end of the year probed their perceptions of the PSCE activities implemented throughout the year. All the focus children had some positive perceptions of the PSCE activities which had been implemented during the school year with many of them stating that the PSCE lessons had been their favourite session. The reasons they liked the activities revolved around the following common themes:

- The activities helped them to get to know the other children in the class.
- The activities helped them to get on better with other children.
- The activities were fun.
- The activities provided a break from schoolwork and an opportunity to relax.

Most of the focus children from both schools identified both positive and negative aspects of the activities. The following reasons were reported as contributing to their dislike of certain activities:

- The activity was too repetitive or not demanding enough. (Bastien; ‘net fish sardine’, Mégane; ‘silent greetings’, Maxence; ‘mirror talking’, Capucine; ‘mirror talking’)
- They had experienced a lack of success with the activity or were unclear about what to do. (Capucine; ‘Warm Fuzzies’, Maxence; ‘back to back’, Bryce; ‘Warm Fuzzies’)
- They had experienced feelings of exclusion or rejection from other children during the activity. (Mégane; ‘net fish sardine’, ‘Warm Fuzzies’, Céleste; ‘Warm Fuzzies’, Bryce; ‘statues’)
- They had felt uncomfortable or ill at ease during the activity. (Céleste; ‘touch something...’, Maxence; ‘touch something...’, Jérôme; ‘Warm Fuzzies’¹)

During the mid-year focus group interviews and the individual end of year interviews with the focus children they were asked to discuss various influences they felt the PSCE activities may have had on themselves and on the other children in the classroom. This included: whether they felt the PSCE activities had influenced how they felt about themselves and about others in the classroom, whether the activities had influenced their behaviour towards others in the class, and whether they felt the PSCE activities had helped children in the class to get on better with each other.

Influence of the PSCE activities on the way they saw themselves

In response to the question ‘Do you think these activities have influenced the way you feel about yourself’, while some of the children felt that the activities had not changed the way

¹ ‘Warm fuzzies’, which was mentioned three times by children as an activity they had disliked, was an activity where children were asked to write kind words to the other children in the class (e.g. what they liked about the other child, what they felt the other child did well).

they felt about themselves, the answers from other children provided evidence that they may have gained a deeper knowledge of themselves through certain activities. These included those which encouraged communication such as the ‘moving circles’ activity, activities where they had to co-operate such as the ‘back to back’ activity and those in which they were asked to share information about themselves such as the ‘coat of arms’ activity even if at times this was difficult for them to articulate. One child mentioned gaining knowledge of himself through discovering different aspects of other children in the class:

[After the activities] we knew more things about the others. We noticed that sometimes we had the same tastes, not just over food but that we liked the same television programmes for example.

(Yann, high SE, mid-year focus group interview).

Influence on how they felt or thought about others in the classroom

Many of the focus children felt that the activities had helped to change their impression of some of the children in the classroom of whom they had previously held false impressions:

Yes, for example, at the beginning of the year if we didn't know the others very well, when we did the PSCE games we could see if we had false ideas about the others.

(Mélissa, low SE, mid-year focus group interview)

Yes, like for Samuel [we learned that what we thought about him was incorrect].

(Maud, medium SE, mid-year focus group interview)

Communication and group work played an important role in the development of their views and feelings concerning others in the class.

Yes [we discovered things about others] when we were in a group and we had to communicate with the others.

(Mégane, low SE, mid-year focus group interview)

When we were in a group we could see that we don't all have the same point of view on things.

(Yann, high SE, mid-year focus group interview)

One child indicated that the warm fuzzies activity helped him to know which children in the class ‘liked him’ and which ones ‘hated’ him which in turn influenced how he viewed them afterward. He also mentioned the Coat of Arms activity as having influenced the way he saw other children, possibly due to an increased awareness of the likes and dislikes of the other children in the class.

Influence on their behaviour towards others

Almost all of the focus children at the Ecole du Centre felt that the activities had influenced their behaviour towards the others in the class. They especially emphasised that the activities provided a means for children to reach out and to get closer to each other. A majority of the focus children at this school highlighted that the activities helped them to become familiar with shy children or children who were new to the class. One focus child felt that the PSCE activities helped her to overcome a relationship of conflict with another child in the class.

Yes, [the activities had an influence on my behaviour] because in the beginning, Mégane and I, we didn't like each other too much. We weren't friends then. We had trouble getting on with each other. Now, things are much better. ...[An activity that helped] was the two circles where we had to change each time (moving circles activity). I found out what she liked and she found out what I liked. ...I really think that it [the PSCE activities] changes a lot of things. Because there are people who can have an idea about other people and in fact the complete opposite is true.

(Mélissa, low SE, end of year interview)

Another child mentioned that the activities had helped her to gain an understanding of others and that over time this helped her to express herself more easily in the classroom.

Yes, through the co-operative games [PSCE activities] and philosophy for children maybe you understand others better and they understand you and that helps you to say what you think and it helps the others too. For example, I was a little hung up because it was a new school year and now I'm not hung up any more.

(Maud, medium SE, end of year interview).

In contrast to this, most of the focus children at Ecole des Vergers felt that the PSCE activities had not influenced their behaviour towards others in the class. The exception to this was Bryce who mentioned laughing and getting on well with others during these activities:

Yes, because sometimes you make friends. Sometimes when the others do...when they tell some jokes it's too funny. [You can't normally do that in class.]

(Bryce, low SE, end of year interview)

Helping children to get along better

The focus children at the Ecole du Centre felt that the activities had helped some children get along better but that for others it had not made any difference. Some felt the activities had especially helped newer children get to know each other but that for the children who already

knew each other it had not changed anything. Others felt that the activities had helped girls more than boys:

I think it's a little bit of both, because it depends. For the girls, I think that it changed a whole lot because in one school year we learned so much about each other. We learned to get to know each other better and to be more tolerant. But for the boys, I think it's normal it stayed the same. The boys never really had any problems. It brought them closer but there wasn't really much to be done.

(Mégane, medium SE, end of year interview).

One boy felt the activities had helped him change his behaviour and that he himself was more accepting of another boy but that he had not noticed a change on the part of the other boys in the class:

It's the same thing now with the boys in the class. In the beginning, with Jocelyn, I was also a little bit like that, but little by little, as I came to know him better, I became more tolerant of him. That helped to change my behaviour but at the same time, the others' behaviour didn't change much.

(Yann, high SE, end of year interview)

Some of the children felt that the activities provided opportunities to approach other children and to learn more about them without having to take the initiative themselves. Although some of the focus children at Ecole des Vergers felt that the activities did not especially help children to get along better and that they were 'just to have fun', two of the focus children pointed to examples where they felt the activities had helped the children get along better. They specifically mentioned children who previously had experienced conflict or who had openly shown dislike for each other and who through the activities had learned to get on with each other:

Yes, because all of a sudden, for example, there was Maxence and Roland, they didn't like each other before and they actually hated each other and when they had the bucket and the watering can ('hunt the pair' activity) they were together to do that (the 'back to back' activity). Then, they didn't hate each other any more. They worked together.

(Cédric, high SE, end of year interview)

Some children felt that the activities helped children to get along better because they had to 'work together' or 'mix together' while others emphasised the fact that it allowed them to have fun and laugh together.

Yes [they got along better]. They were better [after the activities]. Because after, sometimes we had to mix together. And there are some children you don't like, but after that it's alright.

(Bryce, low SE, end of year interview)

Classroom responsibilities

During the end of year interviews the focus children were also asked to discuss their perception of the role of the designated classroom responsibilities. All but one of the focus children identified the purpose of the classroom responsibilities. The children's responses to the question 'What is the purpose of these classroom responsibilities?' are as follows:

- To help them assume responsibilities at home.
- To prepare them for Middle School.
- To 'put order' in the classroom or to 'avoid chaos'.
- To prepare them for the future: job selection, challenges.
- To help the class.
- To help the teacher.
- To know how to better take care of things.

Almost all of the focus children spoke positively about the classroom responsibilities. Overall children preferred responsibilities in which they felt they were contributing to a positive aspect of the classroom, those in which they felt they did well and those through which they felt valued by the teacher and/or their classmates. These included 'erasing the board' and 'cleaning the classroom'. Children often mentioned the positive feedback they received while carrying out these responsibilities.

[The job I liked the best was] erasing the blackboard. The teacher compliments those who do a good job. Those who don't do such a good job start paying attention.

(Mélissa, low SE)

[I liked being the] classroom cleaner. Because in the beginning, everybody said I did such a good job. Because in the beginning I constantly swept the floor even if there were just tiny little papers on the floor. That's why I keep doing this job.

(Bryce, low SE)

I like erasing the board because I have time to do it and I do it well. It's what I prefer.

(Yann, high SE)

Many children also cited ‘taking care of the class pet’ as their preferred classroom responsibility because they liked animals and enjoyed being able to interact with one.

Class council

When asked what the purpose of the class council was, almost all of the focus children from both schools felt that the main purpose was to ‘discuss or solve problems’ that had occurred in the classroom prior to the council. They also mentioned that the class council was meant to deal with certain children’s behaviour difficulties. The majority of the children from Ecole des Vergers described the class council by explaining its structure. This was possibly linked to the importance given to the structure of the class council within the framework of Institutional Pedagogy.

It’s so you can have a [behaviour] belt, criticise or praise someone, have a responsibility, and do ‘comment va la class’ (‘how’s the class doing’) and ‘ça va, ça ne va pas’ (‘Things are well for me’/‘Things are not well for me’).

(Céleste, high SE)

There’s a president, then ‘critiques’ (criticisms), ‘praise’(félicitations), ‘comment va la classe’ and ‘projects’.

(Maxence, low SE)

Overall, nine of the focus children (four from Ecole du Centre and five from Ecole des Vergers) felt the class council was a good thing, one child from Ecole du Centre did not feel it was a good thing and two (one from each school) felt that some aspects of the council were useful while other were not. The main reasons the children felt the class council was a good thing were that the council allowed them to solve problems and that it gave the opportunity to express themselves. One boy from Ecole du Centre felt it allowed them to ‘change the ways things were happening in the class so that everyone would feel better’. Another child from this school felt it gave her an indication of how her behaviour affected the other children and two children from Ecole des Vergers referred to positive aspects of the council such as being able to change responsibilities or earning a new behaviour belt.

The child who felt that the council was not a good thing (Mégane) emphasised that it was not ‘private’ enough and that some children did not feel comfortable saying ‘personal things’ in front of the whole class. The two children who had had mixed opinions about the council felt

respectively that time was wasted during the council and that the council sessions often became too noisy.

While many of the focus children from both schools felt satisfied with the structure and course of the class council, some felt there were parts of the council which were difficult or unnecessary. Four of the focus children (three from Ecole du Centre and one from Ecole des Vergers) referred to the misuse of ‘criticisms’ during the council. One child from Ecole du Centre (Mégane) felt that she had been victimised by one group of children who had expressed numerous criticisms with regards to her. Indeed others emphasised that some of the criticisms were ‘petty’ and that these should not have been included in the class council agenda. One child complained that at times during the class council some of the children misbehaved and talked amongst themselves which occasionally resulted in the council being cancelled.

Key Issues emerging

- There were no statistically significant differences with regards to the measure of general self-esteem over time in the case study classes. In the light of these results, the possibility that the PSCE activities were not effective in raising children’s self-esteem must be acknowledged. However, the following factors may have also contributed to a lack of significant differences with regards to changes in children’s self-esteem:
 - the difficulties in measuring self-esteem;
 - the length of the study;
 - the fluctuating nature of self-esteem which has previously been highlighted in the literature;
 - the ineffectiveness of the implementation of the PSCE activities;
 - other experiences in the children’s school and home lives which outweighed the positive influence the PSCE activities may have had.
- A difference in scores according to gender indicated that girls possibly benefited more from the PSCE activities than did boys.
- There is evidence that the PSCE activities helped the children gain in self-knowledge and in knowledge of others in the classroom.

- The PSCE activities appeared to have improved some children's relationships with their peers and consequently to have contributed to reducing levels of conflict in both classrooms.
- Class councils were seen as positive in terms of solving problems and providing opportunities for children to express themselves although a minority of the case study children felt that occasionally time was wasted during the council and that it was not always an appropriate way to discuss sensitive issues.

CASE STUDIES OF FOCUS CHILDREN

Case studies of six of the 12 focus children are presented in this section in order to investigate in-depth the issues relating to the development of children's self esteem in the two classes. These case studies include three low self-esteem focus children, two medium self-esteem focus children and one high self-esteem focus child: three from each of the two schools.

As stated in Chapter 3, each child's level of self-esteem was determined through the use of a self-report self-esteem questionnaire (BSS). The scores were determined on a cumulative basis and arranged according to subscales. In selecting the high self-esteem and low self-esteem focus children, the children with the highest or lowest scores on the global self-esteem subscales (the first item in the table below) in each class were chosen. The data from the questionnaire were also triangulated with the teachers' comments and perception of each child to form the final group of focus children. As the high, medium and low self-esteem groups were selected according to individual schools, differences in the level of scores indicating high, medium and low self-esteem of the children can be seen between the two schools. This is perhaps due to the different profiles of the two areas in which the schools were located.

The children selected for the in depth case study profiles were chosen as they represented different aspects of the development of self-esteem in the classroom. It was important to choose a variety of profiles of the children in order to investigate the complex nature of the development of self-esteem and to describe the various experiences which may have contributed to its evolution.

The case studies draw on the data obtained through the semi-structured interviews with the individual children at the beginning and end of the school year, the semi-structured interviews conducted with the class teachers at the beginning, mid-point and end of the year, the semi-

structured interviews conducted with the parents and carers of the focus children near the beginning of the year, the observations undertaken throughout the year and the questionnaire data.

Table 6.1 : Self-esteem scores of focus children chosen for case studies- Term 1

	Ecole du Centre			Ecole des Vergers		
Questionnaire subscale	Mégane (Low SE)	Mélissa (Low SE)	Yann (High SE)	Bryce (Low SE)	Julien (Medium SE)	Céleste (Medium SE)
Self-esteem	3.3	3.1	4.6	1	3	2.6
Physical appearance Self-concept	3.7	4	4.3	1	3.3	3
Physical abilities Self-concept	3.7	4.3	5	3	4	4
Relations with peers Self-concept	3	3	5	2.7	3.3	3
Relations with Mother Self-concept	1	4	3	5	N.A.	1
Relations with Father Self-concept	1	3	3	5	N.A.	1
Reading Self-concept	4	3	3.7	3	1.7	2.7
Maths Self-concept	4	4	3	1	3.7	1.7
Learning Self-concept	4	4	3	1	3.5	1.5

LOW SELF-ESTEEM FOCUS CHILDREN

MÉGANE, AGE 10, LOW SELF-ESTEEM FOCUS CHILD, ECOLE DU CENTRE

Questionnaire subscale	Mean score Term 1	Mean score Term 2
Self-esteem	3.3	2
Physical appearance Self-concept	3.7	1.7
Physical abilities Self-concept	3.7	3
Relations with peers Self-concept	3	1.7
Relations with Mother Self-concept	1	3
Relations with Father Self-concept	1	1
Reading Self-concept	4	3.7
Maths Self-concept	4	4.3
Learning Self-concept	4	4

Beginning of year

Mégane's lowest scores on the initial self-esteem questionnaire were in the area of relations with her parents where she had a score of only 1. Although her scores were somewhat higher in terms of physical appearance and relationship with peers in term 1, these had fallen by the end of the school year. However, her relationship with her mother seemed to have improved.

Mégane was first described by Madame Malavoy as 'a girl who is suffering but who doesn't necessarily give you that impression'. She was the youngest of four girls. Two of her sisters, who were older than her, had already moved away from home and the third sister had established herself professionally and was in the process of moving as well. Consequently, Mégane was alone at home for much of the time. Her teacher reported that Mégane's parents were heavily involved in their careers and that they were 'absent quite often'. She stated that she had never seen them at any of the school performances or special days such as the Christmas production or the summer school festival. Mégane also mentioned her parents' schedules during the initial interview:

My parents work for companies where they can come home sometimes at eight or nine in the evening so I don't have much time to show them my school results. If I want to show them my results it has to be in the morning...My parents are, as they already have four girls, they're more focussed on their work than on me.

Mégane's mother had also confided that she worked long hours and often compensated for not being home very often by buying her daughter clothes and spoiling her a bit.

I try to compensate for it [not being present], Mégane sees me in the morning and then she sees me again at 9 o'clock in the evening. It's not always amusing for her.

Madame Malavoy described Megane as having a difficult time fitting in because she had the impression 'she was more involved in adult matters':

She takes herself a bit too much for an adult. Well, at least that is what some people around her say. They say 'you already act like an adult. That's why you can't have child friends, why you can't fit in'.

During the initial interview Mégane reported she found it difficult to make friends due to a lack of acceptance on the part of the other children. She also questioned her level of maturity stating:

Others tell me that I perhaps have the mentality of children who are a bit older than me. But I don't want to be an exceptional child and straightaway talk to the older ones, I would like to have relationships with other children [my age] which, it seems to me, is normal. After that, well, either the children accept me as I am or they don't accept me at all.

Her mother felt that she was rather bored with children her own age due to the fact that she had had more 'adult experiences' than other children her age such as those of having a brother-in-law and a nephew. She felt that she had perhaps 'skipped a stage of her childhood' which had made it difficult for her to fit in at school.

Mégane's family was well-off and many of the children at school reproached or teased her for this. Madame Malavoy felt Megane had suffered a great deal from this type of rejection. In addition, the parents of these children often contributed to these feelings of animosity by forbidding their children to play with Mégane or to go to her house. Madame Malavoy reported that she had heard people from the village criticise Mégane's family for being too wealthy. Mégane also spoke of how some of the other children harassed her because her family was well off:

I put 'I sometimes like being the way I am' [on the questionnaire] because there are some children who make remarks about me wearing designer clothes. Well, I am not going to lie because it's true that sometimes I do. But sometimes there are other children, I've seen other children wearing designer clothes but nobody makes remarks to them.

Madame Malavoy also described Mégane as 'a child who needs a lot of affection and who needs the teacher to take a lot of interest in her'. During the initial interview, when asked what she preferred at school, Megane immediately answered 'the teacher'. Mégane's mother also emphasised Mégane's 'unlimited admiration' for her teacher.

She [the teacher] supports her which made it so that Mégane likes going to school a lot more now. Above all else she likes Mme Malavoy, she trusts her and is less afraid of the mockeries from certain girls who couldn't stand her and who frankly were not very nice to her.

Mégane often referred to having feelings of anxiety. During the initial interview she spoke of her fear of being kidnapped. She also described situations where she had been mocked or insulted by other children in the class and expressed a fear to confide in the children at school as she felt that somebody might 'betray' her and 'spread rumours around the courtyard'.

Mégane's mother felt that she was perhaps a bit oversensitive. She spoke of what she felt was Megane's tendency to over-analyse others' behaviours and mentioned having to take her to the emergency room two years prior due to severe anxiety attacks.

It's true that Mégane interprets a look, interprets something someone says to her so she can very quickly feel like a victim. She analyses a lot which is not always a good thing. Mégane asks herself questions about a lot of things; about existential issues that a child her age doesn't normally think so much about yet.

Mégane also spoke of her habit of analysing situations:

When I don't feel very proud of myself, I spend the whole time looking for ways to solve the problem. This is often difficult for me. When I have problems it really bothers me and I feel awful for months and months. I think about it often, I don't feel very well and I can't concentrate on my work.

Mégane's mother described her as 'someone who likes to be in the spotlight' even when there are only adults present.

When we're having a discussion, she likes to interfere in our conversations, which is not always pleasant, and likes to be in the forefront to give her opinion, so that doesn't always go over so well. And now I can tell that she is entering a pre-adolescent phase

and is starting to put on airs. She has gained in confidence and puts herself in the forefront even at home.

Mégane's mother described her as highly autonomous. Given her parents' professional demands, Mégane had been required to manage on her own. At lunchtime she came home by herself and was responsible for making herself something to eat. After school, she would also come home by herself and remained alone until her bedtime (9pm) at which time her mother usually arrived home from work.

When asked what Mégane's needs were in relationship to her self-esteem, Mégane's mother answered

I think everything needs to stay the way it is right now, there is nothing fundamental that needs changing because she has already made progress compared to how things were two years ago. ...It's true that I feel like she is really at ease, confident and reassured. That's important.

Mégane said that she felt confident in the classroom and often enjoyed learning new things. She participated often in class and had a mature understanding of certain topics. Despite her ease within the classroom, Mégane had a history of frequent absences which often occurred on days on which were scheduled evaluations. In one of her former school reports her teacher had written 'Given the high number of absences, I was not able to properly evaluate Mégane and therefore will refrain from any formal comments on her progress.'

On the questionnaire, Mégane chose the response 'I would like to change some things about myself'. In explaining her answer, she said she would like to change her reactions and the way she behaved. She mentioned thinking about things she has said and regretting them later. She spoke of her tendency to contradict other children and how she always wants to give her opinion.

Mid-year

During the mid-year interview, Mme Malavoy explained that although the situation had been going well in the beginning of the year for Mégane, her situation was progressively getting worse. She described Mégane as often being alone in the courtyard because none of the girls wanted to play with her. Although some of the boys were spending time with her, Mme Malavoy felt that Mégane was very unhappy with the situation.

Mme Malavoy said that Mégane had also become quite attached to her and invited her often to have lunch at her house. She spoke of having invited her to her house one afternoon but mentioned that she felt uncomfortable about it afterward:

I am her whole universe. She even calls me at home. I can tell she is absolutely clinging to me. She's looking for affection. I don't reject her because she really needs it. I invited her to my house one Wednesday afternoon because it really pained me ...Now every week she asks 'Miss, what are you doing for lunch on Friday, you can come eat at my place.'

Mme Malavoy also spoke of several conflicts between Mégane and some of the other girls. One particular conflict involved Maud, one of the focus children in the class. Mme Malavoy felt that Maud was purposely trying to isolate Mégane by turning all of the girls in the class against her. She often made rude or derogatory comments to Mégane. Following one particular incident, both Maud and Mégane's mothers called the teacher to complain about the situation. Mme Malavoy also explained that the mothers had called each other as well and that it had eventually made the situation worse. Maud's mother accused Mégane of psychological harassment and had notified the police and asked that her complaint against Mégane be registered.

On another occasion the teacher felt it necessary to bring all of the girls in the class together in a separate room to discuss another incident when the group of girls had joined together to isolate and reject Mégane. The girls had all gathered in one corner of the courtyard to purposely point at Mégane and laugh in order to make her feel bad. When asked about why they had done this, some of the girls stated that Mégane was trying to 'manipulate' them, to steal their friends and turn them against each other. Two of the girls ended up crying and saying they were sorry whereas the other three, Maud, Mélissa and Liz reaffirmed that they would never be friends with Mégane.

As a result, Mme Malavoy had Mégane and Maud sign a contract to promise they would not use any harsh words with each other. During some of the following observations they could be seen playing and laughing together.

End of year

The self-esteem questionnaire administered to Mégane at the end of the year showed a drop in many different areas: self-esteem, physical appearance self-concept, physical abilities self-concept, relations with peers self-concept, and reading self-concept.

When asked about these various areas and why her responses had changed, Mégane spoke of the other children's reactions to her. Her relationship with her peers had improved during the second trimester as she had been accepted by two girls in the class, but had deteriorated again in the third. The teacher felt it could have been due to a certain possessiveness on the part of Mégane who the teacher thought had tried to control one of the girls to the detriment of the other which created a great deal of conflict. This eventually led to efforts on the part of the other girl to rally some children in the class against Mégane going so far as to establish an 'anti-Mégane club' via the internet.

Near the very end of the school year, however, it appeared that Mégane had again made progress in her relationship with the other children in the class indicated by the way she chose to react to them. Mme Malavoy had noticed that instead of insulting other children during a conflict, Mégane seemed to try to find a compromise. Previously, when faced with a situation of conflict, she had been disrespectful in her words and actions, at the end of the year it appeared that her attitude had changed and that she was making efforts to discuss things before reacting negatively. Mégane also spoke of this change in her behaviour. She specifically spoke of the way in which the PSCE activities had helped her become more 'tolerant':

[The activities] really taught me tolerance. I tolerate more things. Before, if someone did something wrong I would constantly accuse them. Now being tolerant is normal for me. I don't get so upset and go off anymore. Instead I will say what I think calmly but I won't repeat it over and over.

Mégane also said the activities had helped her learn a great deal about herself.

I learned a lot about myself, not mentally but how I am, my behaviour, because I always feel like I overdo it and when bad things happen I don't know what I did wrong, I really don't know what I did. I am not always aware of my behaviour.

Mégane had initially stated on the questionnaire at the beginning of the year that she would like to change some things about herself. At the end of the year she stated that she would like

to change many things. She spoke of wanting to change the way she behaved, the words she used, her gestures towards others, and her flaws. She said:

I would like to change but I can't. In the beginning of the year I was changing but after I fell into a black hole. ...I would like to change the way I am, my behaviour.

She often spoke of her 'flaws' and said that she could see her flaws everywhere, at home and at school.

At home I know I have a lot of flaws because I have a lot of problems at home, with my sisters, they are always giving me cold looks. In fact I prefer being at school because I know there are people who like me there. When I am not at school, I'm not well. I don't eat; I'm not well.

She could, however, also identify her strengths. She spoke of how she was one of the only children in the class to be able to speak in front of the class, how she felt she had a lot of courage and was good at dancing. Although she was aware of these strengths, she based her evaluations of herself on the opinions of the other children in the class. When asked why her perception of her abilities in sports had decreased, she answered:

Well, I know that at times when we have sports and I don't run fast enough the others say 'Why didn't you run faster, you're totally worthless' and I tell them they shouldn't choose me to be on their team in that case. I am always the last person to be chosen anyway when they pick teams. I always hear them say, 'oh no, not her'.

With regards to her schoolwork, Mme Malavoy felt that Mégane had made a great deal of progress. She felt that part of this was motivated by her desire to please the teacher and to be recognised by her. This could be seen in her scores in reading, maths and learning self-concept which had remained relatively high throughout the year. Mme Malavoy emphasised Mégane's excellent writing skills which she felt were at a much superior level than children her own age and described her ease at public speaking.

[When she's in front of the class] she's quite at ease, she seems to place herself almost above the others. It is as if she's taken my place. ...She says the most unbelievable things! The way she speaks and says things to others, it shows a certain assurance and a certain... it's not as if she felt superior or anything but it's close.

At the end of the year Mégane's parents had decided to send her to a private secondary school in order to remove her from the group of children she had been at school with for the past seven years and to provide her with a new start. In speaking of this future change, she

expressed her desire to change and to have new experiences. She spoke of how she was looking forward to starting over with a new group of children who would not know her past as the 'scapegoat' of the class.

Conclusion

Despite evidence during the final interviews with Megane and Mme Malavoy that Mégane had managed to modify some of her behaviours and was becoming more accepted by her peers, the results of the self-esteem questionnaire clearly highlight Mégane's negative evaluation of herself. Although Mégane was able to identify many of her strengths, these were overlooked in the light of her interpretation of what the other children, and in particular the other girls in the classroom, thought of her. Megane's need for attention, which possibly stemmed from her challenging home situation, seemed to interfere with her attempts to establish meaningful friendships. The stigma attached to her family's status in the village and her history of conflict with other girls in the classroom also acted as a barrier to the positive influence of the PSCE activities.

However, Mégane did appear to benefit from the PSCE activities which she felt allowed the other children to get to know and to understand her better. She also reported that the activities had helped her to get to know herself better and had raised her awareness and understanding of her own thoughts and behaviour. Much of these insights came to her at the end of the year, which could point to the importance of implementing PSCE activities over a prolonged period of time in order for them to be effective and to have sustained benefit.

Key Issues

- This case study underlines the limits with regards to the influence one teacher and the implementation of the PSCE activities can have on children's self-esteem. Harter (1999) emphasises the importance of support from different sources for the child and highlights the need for the child to also value such sources of support and approval. A child who receives a large amount of support from a teacher but very little support from peers or parents will tend to have lower self-esteem.
- The lack of acceptance from peers and parents can place children in a position where they are no longer able to see their positive traits, or where these positive traits do not hold much importance. Lack of support from parents, especially with regards to

perceived ‘availability’ of parents can deprive children of a sense of security. ‘They have a negative view of themselves and view others as unresponsive to their needs. Consequently, insecure children are likely to expect further rejections and may behave in ways which elicit them’ (Liebermann, Doyle & Markiewicz, 1999, p.204)

- Children need to possess some foundational social skills which contribute to pro-social behaviour including co-operating, finding common interests, peacefully resolving conflicts and being ‘attentive, approving and helpful’ (Rubin, 1980, p.51 in Ladd, 2005) and practice those skills in order to not only be accepted by their peers but to maintain acceptance which leads to lasting friendships. Some children find themselves unconsciously reproducing negative behaviours or reactions which feed into the cycle of peer rejection (Ladd, 2005). These behaviours could be linked to the children’s perceptions and interpretation of events as well which suggests that cognitive behavioural therapy could be an effective first step in modifying children’s negative behaviours.

MÉLISSA, AGE 10, LOW SELF-ESTEEM FOCUS CHILD, ECOLE DU CENTRE

Questionnaire subscale	Mean score Term 1	Mean score Term 2
Self-esteem	3.1	3.7
Physical appearance Self-concept	4	4
Physical abilities Self-concept	4.3	3.7
Relations with peers Self-concept	3	4
Relations with Mother Self-concept	4	4
Relations with Father Self-concept	3	4
Reading Self-concept	3	3.3
Maths Self-concept	4	3.3
Learning Self-concept	4	4

Although Méliissa’s scores were generally not as low as Mégane’s she had the lowest score in her class in terms of the general self-esteem subscale (3.1). By the end of the year this had improved slightly to 3.7. Her relations with her peers had also improved, from 3 to 4.

Beginning of the year

Mélissa lived in the village where Ecole du Centre was located. Her father's family had been winegrowers there for several decades; her mother was from another part of France. Mélissa had two sisters, one older and one younger, and a younger brother. She was often responsible for taking care of her younger brother and sister and spent a good amount of time playing with them and helping them with their homework. Mme Malavoy remarked that Melissa's mother had often had difficulties getting along with the people from the village. She described her manner as sometimes aggressive but believed this was due to a lack of self-confidence.

Mme Malavoy described Mélissa as 'a laid back girl' whose school results were 'average'. Mélissa's mother described her as 'unpredictable', 'a brilliant student' and 'a hard worker'. She reported that Melissa learned quickly and more easily than her older sister. According to her mother, Mélissa did not have many friends because she found it difficult to be friends with more than one child at a time. She referred to a recent incident in which Mélissa's long-time close friend had stopped speaking to her because 'another girl had latched on to the duo'. She stated that 'with Mélissa, it's all or nothing, because she won't share her friendship'.

Mélissa's mother admitted that she rarely praised her:

I have a hard time praising them [her children] for anything. It's surely one of my biggest flaws because I feel that they have everything they need to succeed. ... Praising them every time they get a good mark or do something, well, I just have a hard time with that. This bothers them a lot, though. Perhaps that makes them feel undervalued. But I was never praised either when I was young. That's why I keep reproducing the same thing.

Mélissa described herself as shy, especially in front of the teacher. She mentioned being proud of herself when she had high marks and not very proud when her marks were lower. She had a habit of biting her fingernails, which her brother and sisters also had, and said she wished she did not do this because her fingernails were not so nice. She also mentioned wishing she were taller and that she did not like the beauty mark on her nose. She spoke of how, at times, other children upset her by making hurtful remarks or criticising her behind her back:

Sometimes the other children bother me. They say I don't have good marks or they say things about me behind my back.

Mid-year

The teacher described Melissa as ‘the ideal student’ who was liked by everyone in the class. She said Melissa ‘showed a great deal of initiative’, was responsible and often offered to help out in the classroom. Her marks were not excellent but generally good. She believed Mélissa’s self-esteem had increased since the beginning of the year. Having noticed that Mélissa almost never raised her hand or participated in the beginning of the year, Mme Malavoy had made an effort to call on her more often and to give her classroom responsibilities. She pointed out that Melissa always seemed very happy when she was able to help and that perhaps that had contributed to an increased sense of self-esteem. During the classroom observations Mélissa was quite often seen smiling and seemed to get on very well with the other children.

During the mid-year focus group interview Mélissa spoke highly of the PSCE activities. She emphasised that she felt the activities had allowed her to get to know the other children in the class more easily. This was something she mentioned often wanting to do but that at times she was too shy or embarrassed to do so:

For example, you say to yourself, I am going to see that person and you know that you are capable but when you are in front of that person, you really don’t know what to ask or to say. [The activities help you to overcome that].

End of year

Melissa’s scores on the self-esteem questionnaire administered at the end of the year had increased in nearly every subscale including the general self-esteem subscale. In the autumn term she had stated that she was ‘sometimes’ able to make friends whereas in the summer term she stated that she was ‘often’ able to make friends. She attributed this change to the PSCE activities which she felt had helped her to get to know the other children and get along better with them. She specifically pointed to a circle-time activity called ‘moving circles’ in which the children were divided into pairs to discuss a topic or question for a short period of time:

...In the beginning of the year Mégane and I didn’t like each other very much. We weren’t at all friends. We were having problems all the time and now things are much better. ... The activity with the two circles where we had to change each time really helped. I found out what she liked and she found out what I liked. Now we know what the others in the class like.

In the autumn term Melissa had stated on the questionnaire that she was 'sometimes' happy with herself whereas in the summer term she answered that she was 'often' happy with herself. She felt that this was due to her improved school results and the fact that her teacher and classmates often encouraged and praised her for her work. She also stated that she 'quite' liked herself the way she was. She had previously responded to this item stating she 'sometimes' liked herself the way she was. She mentioned that she felt more confident and said the PSCE activities had helped her in this because she had been able to get to know the other children in the class better.

Mme Malavoy reported that Melissa's attitude in class had changed over the academic year. She was no longer withdrawn, and was contributing to discussions and participating more in general:

She isn't embarrassed or uncomfortable in front of me any more. She takes risks, speaks up. She helps others. She's very responsible.

The observation data confirmed the increase in participation levels. In the autumn term Melissa rarely raised her hand or raised it very tentatively and then quickly put it down. In the summer term she raised her hand more frequently and contributed confidently during class discussions. Whereas during the first trimester she rarely chose to express her opinion during the philosophy for children sessions, during the third trimester she was at times engaged in debates. She was an active participant in the PSCE activities in which she seemed very much at ease.

Mme Malavoy felt Melissa's enhanced confidence and self-esteem were the result of a combination of classroom practices:

I think she feels much better about herself. She's a girl that everyone likes. What contributed to this change? I think it is everything together, valuing her, the PSCE activities, in her case it's very obvious. It allowed her to have a voice. ... She's one of those sweet little girls who don't make any waves, who sit all nice at the back of the classroom and you forget about them, so I made sure I paid attention to that.

Mme Malavoy reported that Melissa had also made 'impressive' progress in her schoolwork. Mélissa attributed this progress to the help she received from the teacher:

There are times when Mme Malavoy is available for extra help. If you don't understand something you can go see her and she explains things better. ... We also had a certain amount of freedom in class. ... When we were taking notes the teacher said 'you can write in colour, you can write your lessons how you want. If she gave us a something to glue in the notebook we could write before gluing it or after. It was up to us to decide how we wanted to do it.

Conclusion

Mme Malavoy had been 'quite surprised' when Melissa's initial scores on the self-esteem questionnaire had placed her in the low self-esteem group, as she was a child who did not look unhappy and who was not disruptive. Several times during the interviews, Mme Malavoy referred to Méliissa in terms such as 'the perfect little girl', the 'ideal student who is quiet and doesn't cause any problems'. The interviews with Méliissa, however, revealed that she was actually quite shy. It has been suggested (Jones & Myhill, 2004) that some teachers easily overlook the needs of students such as Méliissa as they do not openly communicate the need for extra attention.

The positive reinforcement and attention provided by Mme Malavoy seemed to contribute to an increase in Melissa's self-esteem. As the academic year progressed, Mme Malavoy made an effort to engage Melissa more in lessons and to give her extra responsibilities when it was possible. This attention seemed to have a positive effect and to provide an atmosphere in which Melissa could gain confidence in herself and develop her skills.

The PSCE activities also seemed to help Méliissa gain in confidence as they provided a means for her to approach other children and to get to know them better. She also referred to the PSCE activities as the reason she was involved in fewer conflicts with other children during the final term.

Méliissa also appreciated the freedom and responsibility Mme Malavoy allowed the students to have with regards to how they managed their own schoolwork and behaviour. She spoke of this aspect as being the thing she had most enjoyed in the class during the year. This freedom and the attitude of responsibility conferred upon the students led to a trusting relationship between the teacher and the students which might have contributed to Méliissa's increased openness and participation in class.

Key Issues

- There has been evidence (Jones & Myhill, 2004; Jones, 2005) that children, girls in particular, who are quiet and demand no extra attention in the classroom are often overlooked. This case study suggests that such children might benefit from PSCE activities as they provide spaces for all children to have a voice. These activities can provide an impetus for more frequent exchanges with the other children in the class and can allow the teacher and children to view another side of the child.
- PSCE activities can provide the means for more quiet children to get to know others in a non-threatening way. The activities also may act as a means to resolve conflict by allowing the children to come into contact with each other and to discover aspects of other children they were not previously aware of.
- This case study provides some evidence that the building of a trusting and responsible relationship between the teacher and the students, which has been highlighted previously by both Humphrey (2003) and Burns (1982) as one of the key teacher behaviours which promote self-esteem in the classroom, can help some children to feel more confident about themselves and their abilities.

BRYCE, 10 YEARS OLD, LOW SELF-ESTEEM FOCUS CHILD, ECOLE DES VERGERS

Questionnaire subscale	Mean score Term 1	Mean score Term 2
Self-esteem	1	2.7
Physical appearance Self-concept	1	3.3
Physical abilities Self-concept	3	3.3
Relations with peers Self-concept	2.7	2.3
Relations with Mother Self-concept	5	5
Relations with Father Self-concept	5	5
Reading Self-concept	3	3.3
Maths Self-concept	1	1.7
Learning Self-concept	1	3.5

Bryce had the lowest score possible on the general self-esteem, physical appearance, maths and learning self-concept items and the lowest score of all the children in the case study classes in the area of relations with peers. In comparison, he scored very highly in terms of his

relationship with his parents, although the other data collected suggests that he might have been exaggerating the quality of this relationship when completing the questionnaire.

Bryce lived in a flat in a subsidised low-income housing complex with his father, his father's partner and his six-year old brother. He spent approximately one weekend per month with his mother who lived in another town. Bryce's mother did not have stable employment or transportation. The teacher mentioned that Bryce often confused his step-mother with his mother during their discussions. In the initial interview Bryce referred to his step-mother as 'Mum' and did not mention his biological mother.

Three years prior, Bryce had been placed in a school for children with special needs where he had spent one year in a class with a very small number of children and where psychological and educational support staff was available. Since leaving that school he had not received any specific educational or psychological support apart from the support provided by the teacher in the classroom.

Beginning of the year

Mme Normand explained that Bryce had already made a great deal of progress within the past year with regards to his behaviour in class. The previous year, Bryce had often had tantrums and cried in class. At the beginning of the 2007 school year Mme Normand noticed that he was no longer crying in class when he made mistakes; instead he would turn his head away from the teacher or start putting all of his materials away. Mme Normand also said that he had some problems with repetitive types of behaviour such as rocking himself back and forth in his chair or continuously tapping his pencil. She wondered whether Bryce had been a victim of some form of abuse.

Bryce's father mentioned that Bryce had had a difficult past. He and his partner felt that perhaps something traumatic had happened to him when he was three years old when, for a period of six months, he was alone with his mother. His father had had no contact with him during this time. They also felt that Bryce's mother did not give him much attention and preferred to give all of her attention to Bryce's younger brother. They described Bryce as being a 'fragile' and 'anxious' boy. They reported that he liked going to school but that he did not have many friends there. Bryce's father and step-mother both suggested that what Bryce needed most was to have some close friends.

The initial interview with Bryce came just after an incident which had had a negative impact on Bryce. Throughout the interview he repeatedly came back to the events revolving around the same incident. The incident involved a conflict between Bryce and the supply teacher who replaced Mme Normand on Monday and Thursday afternoons and who had given Bryce a written punishment which was to be signed by his father. This had frightened Bryce so much that he stayed at school and refused to go home. He explained to the teacher that, if he showed the punishment to his father, he would be severely punished. This led the teacher to contact the father personally which caused much distress for Bryce:

Dad says he doesn't want to see me any more. ... He says he doesn't want to see me and that he's going to leave. It was [because of] a note that called Dad in to school. He went and when he came back he said that he was fed up with the stupid things I did. ...In fact I had said some things and suddenly he said I had lied and that I would have to write a letter of apology.

Bryce's initial questionnaire displayed low mean scores in every subscale. For many of the items he had chosen the lowest possible number. For example, he answered 'I don't feel at all good about myself.' When asked why he chose this answer he stated:

Because sometimes I am outside and nobody wants to play with me. So I always have to stay like that. I ask everybody but nobody wants to play with me. In class I can't stop blurting things out, I just don't feel good about myself.

Bryce often spoke of being punished at home and at school. He felt that many times he was punished unfairly as it was not always he who had done something wrong.

Sometimes we have to stop in class because the others are out of hand and sometimes ... she [the teacher] makes a mistake [and says its me] but it's not me, Each time she makes a mistake with the names like that. ... It happens really often.

His perception of frequent punishments also influenced his choice of 'I am never happy with myself':

That's because each time, I get noticed, I am punished, I'm not happy. Because that really makes me sad. Because, otherwise they are always scolding me like that.

Bryce mentioned feeling uncomfortable when speaking in front of the teacher and his peers. He did not always understand the questions the teacher asked him. He said that at times such as when he had to recite a poem in front of the class, the other children would laugh and make

fun of him because he was not able to recite it; He could not remember it without looking at the text.

Bryce also spoke of his difficulties learning new lessons and new skills. He spoke of how he had to spend a great amount of time copying his exercises over and how he took much longer than the others. He referred to several areas in which he had difficulties:

Maths, reading. I am not very good at reading [out loud], like that. Each time they say 'louder, louder' and then I can't concentrate. Then the teacher says 'louder'. So I read louder and then everyone just starts talking like that. And each time I have to start everything over, just start everything over.

Bryce stated that he wanted to change many things about himself. In particular, he wanted to misbehave less:

It's true that in the beginning I was always misbehaving. And now, I'm still misbehaving too much because Dad can't put up with me anymore.

Mid-year

Mme Normand pointed out that Bryce needed much more time than his peers to understand and assimilate new concepts (such as fractions in maths) but that after much practice and help from the teacher and his classmates, he eventually understood and no longer need the help of others. Mme Normand had started special workshops on Tuesday afternoons during which she would do individual work for twenty minutes with either Bryce or Céleste (another of the focus children). She also mentioned that Bryce's father and stepmother could not help him in certain areas, as the subject matter had become too difficult for them. Mme Normand felt that this personalised individual support was very beneficial for him and she highlighted that his school results were improving.

She also reported that Bryce had not had any crying spells or tantrums during the autumn term. She felt this was linked to the various practices in the class which provided feedback for him regarding his behaviour and specifically referred to the class council:

It was especially the 'council', the encouragement, when he was praised, I even think the criticisms, well, perhaps it was the criticisms which helped him to progress the most.

Mme Normand did mention, however, that when a supply teacher was in charge of the class Bryce reverted to his previous behaviour:

Friday when there was a supply teacher he spent half the day in the toilettes crying. I'm not exactly sure why, he [the teacher] must have made some sort of remark to him, but, you see, he [Bryce] is still capable of reverting back to scratch.

Mme Normand said she felt Bryce was still quite unsure of himself. She noticed that he said, after every new lesson, that he did not understand. Her goal was to enable him to work independently without reassurance and further explanation from the teacher or a classmate.

During the mid-year focus group interview Bryce stated that he did not like the PSCE group activities because he was not often chosen by the other children.

Nobody chooses me. Everybody hates me, apart from Romain. ...Because I do things and everybody tells me to stop. ...During the class council, everybody criticises me.

It is evident that despite attempts by Mme Normand to mediate negative reactions or comments from children when they arose during the PSCE activities and the class council, Bryce interpreted such behaviours and comments in a negative way.

End of year

On Bryce's final self-esteem questionnaire all of the mean scores for the subscales had increased with the exception of the 'relations with peers subscale'. Despite the decrease in that area of the questionnaire, Bryce had specifically stated that the PSCE activities had enabled him to make some friends:

[During the activities] sometimes you can make friends. ... Sometimes we laugh. Sometimes when the others say silly things it's really funny.

He also mentioned that the activities allowed the children in the class to get along better with each other:

Yes [they got along better]. They were better [after the activities]. Because after, sometimes we had to mix together. And there are some children you don't like, but after that it's alright.

Bryce felt that the class council and the behaviour belts were very helpful. He liked the class council because he felt it allowed children to resolve the problems they had in the courtyard or in class. He found the behaviour belts particularly helpful to him:

[The belts were helpful] because of the rules. ...Sometimes you can reread the rules to see if you've been successful and all that.

Mme Normand felt that Bryce had gained in confidence. She pointed out that his behaviour had greatly improved. Whereas previously he would react to failure by shutting himself off or by putting away all of his materials, at the end of the year he had progressed to a point where he would listen to the teacher and persevere at the task.

He tries to work, he doesn't get discouraged anymore and in the end he succeeds. The work that the others did this morning, he was also able to do it. He needs more time but he manages to do it. He can also see that he gets results from that, that he's about where everyone else is in the class and that he is not completely lost. So he has realised that when he listens to the explanations that we're willing to give him it works and when he works at it that helps too. He is no longer in a state of 'If I don't succeed right away, I'll never succeed'. Now he's really understood, I find, and he is getting fairly good results.

Mme Normand felt that helping him to see how his behaviour was interfering with his learning was a key step in his making progress. Once he was aware that certain of his behaviours were unproductive, he was able to adjust his behaviour and realise that through these changes he was able to succeed. For example, whereas previously when he did not understand a lesson or exercise he would revert to behaviours such as closing all of his books and refusing to work, bursting into tears or shouting out that the work was too difficult, by the end of the year he was starting to listen and to begin his school work more promptly. Mme Normand also emphasised the positive influence of the PSCE activities:

All of the PSCE activities [helped him] because in the playground he still is, not all of the time, but sometimes, he is still alone. [During the PSCE activities] that's really a time when he fits in. When we do the PSCE activities in sports, he's with all of the others, he's really happy and I think that that really helped him a lot. That he saw that nobody was rejecting him. ...No one really rejects him anymore.

She felt he had made progress in the area of social competence within the context of the classroom. He was easily able to work with another classmate or participate in group work. However, she underlined his continuing difficulty outside of the classroom:

During break time there are still many times when he will just be walking around the courtyard by himself. But he recognises himself that he has difficulties playing with others, accepting the rules. He is not really rejected by the others, the other children are willing to accept him but it's often he who causes them to be fed up after a while because he just does anything he wants.

Conclusion

Bryce made a great deal of progress academically and in the area of self-esteem over the year. With his teacher's encouragement, support and firm guidance he was able to change the behaviours which had been hindering his academic progress. The structure provided by the system of the behaviour belts gave him clear guidelines and objectives toward which he could work. Bryce had the impression that learning tasks were a bit easier than in the beginning of the year and that he had more success in doing them. He had also gained an awareness of how his behaviour affected others. He spoke of how he intended to improve his behaviour by 'not acting so goofy' at times.

The PSCE activities had provided an opportunity for Bryce to come into contact with the other children and to be accepted by them. He often mentioned having fun and laughing with them. This is something he said he was still not able to do during the other classroom activities or outside the classroom. Bryce had drawn attention to the fact that the PSCE activities obliged the children to co-operate and participate with other children they did not particularly like and believed this had enhanced peer relations in the class.

Bryce's continuing lack of social competence seemed still to isolate him and prevent him from establishing meaningful friendships. The PSCE activities had provided a starting point for such friendships but were insufficient in providing him with enough of the social skills necessary to the sustainability of long-term friendships or peer group acceptance in the playground.

Key Issues

- This case study supports previous evidence that children's peer acceptance can be improved through helping these children to understand the effects of their behaviour on their peers and by encouraging them to use this knowledge as a catalyst to change their behaviour (Bierman, 1986; Ladd, 2005).
- PSCE practices provide a means for inclusion of children who have difficulties being accepted by their peers (Humphrey, 2004). Such children often have no means of making contact with their peers either because of previous conflict or behavioural problems which act as a barrier for the child to gaining entry into a peer group. PSCE activities can provide a space in which children are required to co-operate with each other in an organised but enjoyable way.

- There appear to be limitations to the amount of approval PSCE activities can generate for children who are victims of peer rejection. If activities involve choosing a partner or forming groups, some children may continue to experience peer rejection by either being excluded from the group or by not being chosen as partner during the activity. The way in which PSCE activities are organised and managed by the teacher is crucial.
- Consideration also needs to be given to how progress made in the building of peer relations during explicit PSCE activities can be transferred to more informal social settings such as the playground.

MEDIUM SELF-ESTEEM FOCUS CHILDREN

JÉRÔME, AGE 9, MEDIUM SELF-ESTEEM FOCUS CHILD, ECOLE DES VERGERS

Questionnaire subscale	Mean score Term 1	Mean score Term 2
Self-esteem	3	4.7
Physical appearance Self-concept	3.3	3.3
Physical abilities Self-concept	4	4
Relations with peers Self-concept	3.3	5
Relations with Mother Self-concept	N.A.	4
Relations with Father Self-concept	N.A.	4
Reading Self-concept	1.7	3.7
Maths Self-concept	3.7	3.7
Learning Self-concept	3.5	3

Jérôme's lowest score on the initial self-esteem questionnaire was in the area of reading self-concept with a score of 1.7; This contrasted with his scores in the area of maths and learning self-concept which were relatively higher. By the end of term 3, his score for reading self-concept had improved significantly as had his scores for relations with peers which had increased from 3.3 to 5. Jérôme had chosen not to answer the questions on the initial questionnaire with regard to his relations with his mother and father. As indicated in the methodology section, it was made clear to the children that they did not have to answer any question they did not wish to. During the initial interview with Jérôme, when asked whether he had overlooked these questions or whether he had not wished to answer them, he confirmed that he had not wished to answer them.

Beginning of the year

Jérôme lived on a farm in an isolated rural area in the mountains where his parents owned a restaurant and bed and breakfast. He had two half-brothers from his mother's first marriage who did not live with him. His parents were very busy running the farm and the restaurant which the teacher felt left them with little time to spend with Jérôme. Due to the isolated location of his home, Jérôme did not have many opportunities to socialise with the other

children from school. Mme Normand mentioned that he often had problems adapting to the other children in the classroom and felt that this may have been due to the fact that he did not have much contact with other children on the farm due to its isolated position. He had earned the reputation in class of being a 'grouch' and some children were afraid of him due to his large build and history of aggressive behaviour at school. At times the children made fun of him because he 'smelled of cows'. Mme Normand described him as an 'average' student who often refused to do work in areas which did not please him.

Jérôme's mother described him as a child who was confident in himself but who quickly became angry and often lost his temper. He became emotional and cried quite easily. She mentioned that he often helped out on the farm or in the restaurant. She felt that he enjoyed school and that he had a gift for learning. She pointed out that he especially enjoyed participating in the class councils and had recently been very excited about taking on the role of president. She noticed that occasionally he was quite sad when he came home from school but that it did not happen often. When asked what needs Jérôme might have with regard to his self-esteem, his mother answered:

If he has a little bit [of self-esteem] that's fine. He's fairly sure of himself I think. I signed him up for piano lessons this year. He has a wide range of various interesting things to see and to do. And at school they do nice things too. They went swimming; they're going to go skiing. So, just continue on like that.

During the initial interview, Jérôme did not engage in discussion and answered many of the questions asked by saying he did not know. He did mention that he did not enjoy school and that he preferred to stay at home and help his father on the farm. He said he felt good about himself when he was helping his father and did not feel good about himself when his father scolded him.

Mid-year

Mme Normand stated that Jérôme still refused initially to do some lesson activities but that after a while he usually gave in and participated. Once he decided to work at a task, his results were fairly good. Socially, she found that he had made some progress. Whereas in the beginning of the year he used to hit other children, at the mid-year point he was no longer hitting others. Although Jérôme would occasionally shout out insults or complaints, Mme Normand felt he was getting along much better with the other children in general. She reported that in the beginning of the year he had not wanted to sit next to any of the other

children. In response to this, she had added an extra desk on the far end of the others so that he could sit by himself. Now he was able to sit between two other children with fewer conflicts occurring.

Mme Normand believed that Jérôme's improving relationships with his peers were the result of the discussions which took place during the class council. Previously many of the other children had criticised him for his behaviour. They were able to point out some of his behaviours and discuss how they felt about them. This led him to a greater level of self-awareness which eventually helped him to modify his actions:

He realised that he didn't have much of a choice. If he wanted to be accepted by the others and if he wanted to make progress with regards to the behaviour belts, if he wanted more responsibility in the class, he had to stop. It's not something that happens overnight though because he was actually quite impulsive.

End of year

Mme Normand believed Jérôme's self-esteem had increased over the school year. She cited examples of his increased self-awareness and his satisfaction of his improved behaviour, explaining that she had heard him give advice to other children saying, 'Don't be like I was before. You know, I used to be like that before, last year, and now I don't act that way any more.' She reported that there were no conflicts now between Jérôme and his peers and that children who used to be in conflict with him or who were afraid of him were now playing and spending time with him outside of school:

Last year and at the beginning of this year Jérôme was the boy that everyone was afraid of at school. Now that is not at all the case. Now, it's very rare that Jérôme hits another child. He's aware of all that. The others like to play with him to do things with him. They're not afraid of him and he has better self-esteem. On top of it, he's a really smiley, laid back kid.

Mme Normand believed that the class council had played an important role in helping him change his behaviour. He had been given a written contract in the beginning of the year which she felt had helped him to make a commitment to changing his behaviour. Once he made a commitment and had followed through with it, the others in the class praised him for it. Mme Normand especially felt that the PSCE activities had helped him to come into contact with the other children in a positive non-violent way:

All of the [PSCE] activities allowed him to see that he could come into contact with the other children without hitting them. That was something he wasn't familiar with. For him, as soon as anyone came very close to him it was, wham! He would punch them.

Mme Normand contrasted his behaviour earlier in the year, when he had had great difficulties communicating without being aggressive, with his behaviour at the end of the year, when he had learned to express himself in a non-aggressive way. She felt the PSCE activities (such as 'comfortable coco', 'statues', and 'back to back') had given him the social skills to enable him to interact effectively with the children in the class.

During the final interview with Jérôme, he explained the changes that had taken place on the self-esteem questionnaire and with regards to his behaviour were the result of being older:

It's because I'm bigger now and I am able to do more things.

There were many aspects of school life he enjoyed now. Whereas on the autumn self-esteem questionnaire he had stated 'I am sometimes able to make friends', on the summer term questionnaire he had answered 'I am easily able to make friends'. He explained how he had made new friends and that he found making friends easier now. He also stated that the other children were playing with him more often than in the beginning of the year.

When asked how he felt about the class council, he stated it was very important. He mentioned that he had been 'praised' at times during the council and that it had made him feel good about himself. He felt that the class council was very useful because it allowed the children to talk about what was happening at school and to discuss what the children were doing at school in general.

It's for taking care of the problems that happen during the week, things that aren't working out just right. Sometimes we change responsibilities ...It's good, we can say anything, everything that the others have done. ... We can criticise someone who is bothering us or say something they're not doing right.

Conclusion

On the farm where Jérôme lived he did not have many opportunities to interact with other children or siblings. This appeared to contribute to the difficulties he had experienced in interacting with other children in the beginning of the year and in previous years. His emotional control was low which led him to display impulsive or aggressive behaviour when interacting with his peers. This had made the other children afraid of him. The class council

appeared to provide him with clear guidelines on acceptable behaviour and had helped to develop his social skills. He first became aware of the effects of his behaviour on others and then was able to witness more acceptance from his peers as he modified his behaviour. In addition to this, as he succeeded in changing his behaviour, he was awarded increasingly important behaviour belts which allowed him more freedom and responsibility in the classroom.

The PSCE activities seemed to provide a safe place for Jérôme to come gradually into contact physically with the other children. In the beginning of the year, he did not want to participate in the activities and preferred to watch the other children. As the year progressed he began participating more. The observations undertaken at the end of the year provided evidence that he was actively participating in all of the activities and he was laughing and having fun with the other children. This is reflected in the gains in his score on the 'relation with peers' questionnaire item which rose from 3.3 to 5. The PSCE activities allowed the other children to come in to contact with Jérôme in a relaxed atmosphere. In this way they were able to see another side of him which was not aggressive but rather sensitive and open.

The key to the increased peer acceptance he received near the end of the year possibly resided in the combination of helping him modify his behaviour through the class council and providing the opportunity for him and the other children to experience positive contacts with each other.

Key issues

- A starting point for change in self-esteem appears to be in modifying some children's behaviour towards other children, especially where aggressive behaviour is involved. (Ladd, 2005)
- Change in behaviour can be initiated by helping the child gain awareness of the effects of his behaviour on the other children.
- Children with poor social skills and those who are prone to aggressive interactions with their peers need to be provided with contained situations in which they are able to practice new behaviours such as non-aggressive contact or communication. These situations provide both the child with the behaviour problems and his peers with an alternative image of the child and alternative ways of interacting.

- Being able to assume positions of responsibility, such as president of the class council or making sure the classroom is ready in the morning can provide certain children with feelings of worthiness and pride which may contribute to a positive sense of self.

CÉLESTE, AGE 9, MEDIUM SELF-ESTEEM FOCUS CHILD, ECOLE DES VERGERS

Questionnaire subscale	Mean score Term 1	Mean score Term 2
Self-esteem	2.6	2.6
Physical appearance Self-concept	3	4
Physical abilities Self-concept	4	4
Relations with peers Self-concept	3	4
Relations with Mother Self-concept	1	5
Relations with Father Self-concept	1	5
Reading Self-concept	2.7	2.3
Maths Self-concept	1.7	2
Learning Self-concept	1.5	3

Céleste's lowest scores on the initial self-esteem questionnaire were in the area of her relations with her parents where she had a score of 1. An improvement in her relations with her parents over the period of the study is suggested by the large increase in her scores in this area in term 3. Indeed, this was the largest increase out of all of the pre/post test scores. The scores with regards to maths and learning self-concept, which were relatively low (1.7 & 1.5) in term 1 also show a slight increase in term 3, in particular in relationship to learning self-concept

Beginning of the year

Céleste lived in the countryside with her parents and her younger sister. She was very fond of animals and spent a considerable amount of time taking care of the various family pets. Both of her parents worked full time and were not often present after school and in the evenings.

Céleste had repeated a class the previous year. Mme Normand described her as an average student who had great difficulties understanding, especially with regards to abstract concepts. She gave the example of Céleste being unable to distinguish between nouns and verbs. Céleste was also unable to retain new knowledge. Mme Normand wondered whether Céleste

had a specific learning disability which might have been interfering with her being able to retain information.

Céleste's parents each saw her in a different way. Her father felt that she was a child who 'simply needed to take her time' even if it meant repeating several years in school. Céleste's mother, on the other hand, expressed concern that Céleste was not able to finish her homework and that she often 'put up great resistance' to accomplishing her schoolwork. She mentioned that homework sessions frequently ended in arguments and that Céleste would often be in tears. Céleste's mother described her as a child who daydreamed a lot and who would at times sit and stare off into space for hours. She was described as a child who did not ask for many things, such as computer games or toys, but rather who was content to spend her free time outdoors taking care of and observing animals. Céleste's father believed that she was bored with school and that she would benefit from more 'hands on learning'. He mentioned that she seemed to do well in lessons where she could be active, such as science and drama. Céleste's mother, on the other hand, felt that Céleste was capable of succeeding in school but that she was not willing or interested in putting in the necessary effort. She referred to her several times in this manner stating that Céleste preferred to be left alone or to spend time on activities which were 'easy'. She also described her as a child who had difficulty making new friends or integrating into an unfamiliar group of children such as at a wedding or large gathering. Her father believed that her poor results in school were linked to a lack of motivation as Céleste did not see any need to learn certain subjects in order to get on in life as seen in this extract:

(Mother) At school, she could succeed but she just doesn't try.

(Father) It's been two years that in order to look after the ducks and hens she doesn't need to know how to read and write. Her goal is to be a farmer.

(Mother) Not necessarily a farmer...

(Father) To take care of animals. And for that, in order to communicate with animals, she doesn't need to know how to read, write and count. She doesn't need to strain herself in order to please everyone, maybe for her, it's enough.

Neither of her parents mentioned the possibility of Céleste having a learning disability. The father believed that the traditional school system was not adapted to her needs and was considering the possibility of placing Céleste in an alternative school in the area.

During the initial interview, Céleste mentioned not liking school because learning new things was very difficult for her. She spoke of studying for tests or dictations (an exercise in which the students first learn a text at home, after which the teacher dictates this text orally to the class and the students are expected to reproduce the text with the correct spelling and grammar) and then forgetting the text she had studied which contributed to her being unhappy with herself. She said she enjoyed copying down her lessons the most because it did not require her to work so hard. She enjoyed reading; her favourite genre was stories about horses. Céleste said she felt good about herself when she was participating in activities she liked at home or at school. She mentioned not feeling good about herself when her parents scolded her. She was not happy with her appearance and in particular with her teeth which had large spaces between them. She explained that she did not feel very confident in herself because at times she wanted to do things but was not able to do them:

There are some things I want to do but I'm not always able to. ... Sometimes I am afraid but not all the time.

Mid-year

Just prior to the mid-year interview with Mme Normand, Céleste had been evaluated by the school psychologist upon Mme Normand's request. She had been diagnosed with having 'absences', periods in which she would 'not be mentally present'. However, no immediate treatment or support was offered. Her parents had considered having her monitored by a speech therapist but the educational team felt this would not be particularly beneficial.

Mme Normand emphasised that Céleste worked hard in class, listened well and in general tried her best. However, her results were inconsistent. One day she could achieve a very high mark on a test and the following week she would achieve a very low mark on the same subject matter. Mme Normand had arranged to give Céleste additional individualised support in French and Maths on Tuesday afternoons during various rotating workshops she had set up for the children.

After having met with Céleste's mother several times throughout the year, Mme Normand had the impression that Céleste may have been under a good deal of pressure from her mother who had expressed a strong desire for her to succeed in school.

End of Year

Céleste's overall self-esteem subscale score at the end of the year was unchanged, but this score conceals changes in responses to individual questions. For example, Céleste's scores in some areas increased:

September	'I really do not feel pleased with myself'
June	'I sometimes feel pleased with myself'

September	'I really do not like being the way I am'
June	'I sometimes like being the way I am'

September	'I sometimes feel proud of myself'
June	'I feel proud of myself'

However, some scores decreased:

September	'I never feel uncomfortable saying things in front of the teacher'
June	'I feel quite uncomfortable saying things in front of the teacher'

September	'I sometimes feel confident in myself'
June	'I do not feel confident in myself'.

The greatest difference in scores can be seen in the area of relations with mother and father (where Céleste scored 1 in September and 5 in June). This was the largest increase in any of the areas of all of the focus children. There were also increases on the relations with peers and learning self-concept items.

During the end of year interview, Mme Normand pointed out that Céleste had made considerable progress in all academic areas during the last trimester. She felt that this was linked to the individual academic support she was receiving in school and at home. In school she had begun to attend a special out of class academic support group which worked on literacy and maths skills with two other children twice a week for one hour. Her parents had also arranged to have a private tutor come to her home during the week to help her understand and complete her homework assignments. Mme Normand said that Céleste's school results had improved, that she was participating in class more, and that she was taking on more responsibilities, too.

Mme Normand believed that the PSCE activities had helped Céleste to interact more effectively with her peers. She felt that Céleste's family environment had left her with certain attitudes and prejudices which somewhat isolated her. Mme Normand stated: 'this comes from the environment in which she lives, I think that anything that is new or unfamiliar isn't

[accepted].’ Throughout the year she refused to participate in the PSCE activities and often watched from the outside of the circle. In the last trimester she began to ask to participate in the activities and was observed laughing and engaging with the others. Mme Normand felt that she was willing to take more risks socially. She was more likely, however, to participate in whole group activities, where all of the children were engaged at the same time, such as ‘back to back’, ‘the mirror’ and ‘knock knock knock’ as opposed to activities in which a few of the children were participating and the others were watching (‘comfortable coco’, ‘statues’). At the beginning of the year Céleste had refused to take on any classroom responsibility, however, during the last trimester she willingly agreed to carry out two responsibilities: caring for the class guinea pig, which was the first responsibility Céleste had asked to take on, and washing the black board at the end of the day.

The end of year interview with Céleste illuminated the areas on the self-esteem questionnaire in which there had been gains. When asked what she had liked the most in class during the year, she answered:

Crafts, drawing, Art and the games we did outside ... well, not outside but the ones we did in the hallway [the PSCE activities].

She mentioned that she now sometimes liked learning new things in class because she found learning easier now although she could not articulate why.

It’s still fairly difficult for me. It’s difficult but not as difficult as before, there’s been a little bit of a change.

This change, she felt, had influenced the way she felt about herself and that she liked the way she was more than at the beginning of the year. Although she did not feel she had made any progress in maths or French during the year, she did feel she had improved in sports. Her opinion of her appearance had also changed as she now felt she was ‘fairly pretty’ but she was not sure as to why she now felt this way except that she felt she had grown taller.

Her relationship with friends had improved. Whereas in the beginning of the year on the self-esteem questionnaire she had stated ‘I sometimes am able to make friends’ at the end of the year she reported that she found it quite easy to make friends:

Now I have more friends and more girlfriends, it’s like that now. [They spontaneously come to me] and me to them.

She also referred to her relationship with a particular girlfriend which she felt contributed to her feeling proud of herself:

[I feel proud of myself] because I have a girlfriend now, well, a best friend, and so, that's why I am happy.

Conclusion

Céleste had benefited from the additional learning support provided in school and at home. Although she mentioned that learning was still at times difficult for her, she had made progress in this respect. Céleste's subscale for relations with mother and father increased from 1 to 5 over the course of the year. One possibility for this increase could be a change in her home relationship due to her parents' increased awareness of Céleste's learning disability and a consequent reduction in the level of pressure placed by them on Céleste to achieve. Céleste believed her more positive view of herself was linked to her new relationship with a close friend.

Key issues

- This case study highlighted the importance of recognising and providing support for children's learning/special needs (Orchard, 2007). Support and understanding provided by the teacher and the parents appeared to have helped Céleste feel more at ease in the classroom which perhaps contributed to her increase in participation. It also appeared that greater parental support (possibly greater acceptance and approval) positively influenced Céleste's relations with her parents, an important factor in the development of positive self-esteem (Elbaum & Vaughn, 2001; Ketsetzis et al., 1998; Kernis et al., 2000).
- The 'time' element has also emerged as key. Many children did not seem to have made much progress at the mid-year point and then almost suddenly near the end of the year the teacher was witnessing progress on all levels including socially and academically (DeRosier & Marcus, 2005; Elbaum & Vaughn, 2001).
- The importance of 'friendships' in the way children feel about themselves has been underlined (Ladd, 2005; Mervis, 1998). Céleste mentions several times that she feels good about herself because she now has a 'best friend'.

HIGH SELF-ESTEEM

YANN, AGE 10, HIGH SELF-ESTEEM FOCUS CHILD, ECOLE DU CENTRE

Questionnaire subscale	Mean score Term 1	Mean score Term 2
Self-esteem	4.6	4
Physical appearance Self-concept	4.3	4.7
Physical abilities Self-concept	5	5
Relations with peers Self-concept	5	5
Relations with Mother Self-concept	3	3
Relations with Father Self-concept	3	3
Reading Self-concept	3.7	4.7
Maths Self-concept	3	4
Learning Self-concept	3	4

2

Beginning of the year

Yann scored very highly on the general self-esteem subscale (the second highest in the class) at the beginning of the year, as well as on the physical abilities self-concept and relations with peers self-concept subscales. Yann's scores had either remained the same or increased across the sub-scales except for in one area: the general self-esteem score. The reasons for this somewhat surprising decrease are considered below.

Mme Malavoy described Yann at the beginning of the year as a child whose parents placed 'an enormous amount of pressure on him'. She described his parents as being 'extremely strict and demanding'. She wondered how Yann felt under such pressure and was not positive he was as sure of himself as he appeared. Yann's parents were worried because they felt he worked too slowly but the teacher had found no evidence of this at the start of the year. She mentioned his 'beautiful handwriting' and situated his academic results as somewhere between 'high and very high'.

²During the interview Yann reported that for question N° 20 he would have put another answer. Instead of 'I sometimes feel confident' he felt he should have answered 'I feel really confident in myself'. This would make his mean score for self-esteem 4.3.

His mother described him as ‘an anxious child’ who became worried and stressed as soon as there was something new for him. When asked to mention Yann’s strong points, his mother described him as being ‘very kind, generous and sensitive’. She stated that he had many friends but that she felt, at times, he was treated like the ‘spare wheel’ by his friends when they did not have anyone else to play with. Yann’s mother felt that he was not sufficiently ‘competitive’, referring to the fact that he was not interested in or aware of the marks other children in the class received. She felt that he was not very enthusiastic about school with the exception of History which he quite enjoyed. She reported that ‘his main problem’ was that he was ‘slow’ and that she was afraid that he would not be able to keep up with his work the following year at the lower secondary school. ‘I keep telling him, come on Yann, you must work faster! I am afraid that he won’t be able to follow next year and he’s afraid of that, too!’

During the initial interview Yann appeared at ease and was very talkative. He was highly self-aware and was able to give detailed explanations of his responses on the questionnaire. Several times he mentioned being slow in class and, although he expressed concern in this area, he felt that he also had other qualities which offset this area he felt was a weakness. When asked how he knew he was slow he replied ‘Others tell me that I don’t write quickly enough. My Mum tells me that if I don’t write more quickly I will not be able to keep up next year and I will miss things’. With reference to this issue he also said ‘I am a bit ashamed when I don’t write quickly enough.’ Many of his answers to the questionnaire were linked to this element. He reported ‘sometimes’ feeling happy with himself (instead of ‘I feel happy with myself’ or ‘I feel really happy with myself’) linking this to writing slowly. When he was able to complete an assignment within the given time he felt happy with himself whereas when he was not able to finish an assignment he felt ashamed. Some of the ‘anxiousness’ mentioned by his mother was reflected when he described his level of self-confidence:

Sometimes when I do something and I am having a hard time, I say to myself ‘It’s not worth it. I won’t succeed’. But then it works out after all so I regain confidence again.’

He also commented on his lack of confidence in front of his teacher and peers:

Sometimes I tremble a bit when I speak in front of the teacher. Well, I think that everybody has that, though.

Yann had performed gymnastics at a very high level for several years but had not continued because his parents felt the training (every day for two hours) left him insufficient time for his schoolwork. His sporting achievements were his main source of pride:

I'm often proud of myself when others complement me [on sports performances].

Although on the questionnaire he had indicated that there was nothing about himself he wanted to change, during the interview he mentioned wishing he did not have to wear glasses. He said that this was one factor, along with being able to write faster, that he would like to change in his life.

Yann stated that he 'quite enjoyed' playing with other children and that he made friends quite easily. In discussing this response he said:

I really like making new friends, that way, at least, I am not always playing with the same ones and on top of that it allows me to have good relations with others. [It is easy for me to make new friends] by being nice, and by being trustworthy and having good ideas, well, I think I'm always able to make good friends. When I'm on holiday, I always make new friends simply by being nice.

Mid-year

Mme Malavoy spoke of Yann as a child everybody liked and appreciated. He had been elected to represent his class at a Junior Parliament session in Paris. This involved presenting a proposal for a law on behalf of the class and participating in a session in the French Parliament in which one law would be chosen out of all of the proposals. The teacher mentioned that almost every child in the class had voted for Yann. She described him as always being in a good mood and emphasised that he participated in class a great deal. She felt that he was still under a lot of pressure at home to copy and finish his lessons more quickly.

His handwriting is fantastic though. He applies himself all of the time, he is a bit slow...but he's really a terrific child. He's really great, he finds solutions, he's highly responsible and autonomous ...there's not much to say since everything is really going well for him. He was much slower at the beginning of the year so I put a little clock on his desk and said 'you have such and such amount of time and then we'll be finished' and it worked really well. But he still writes really nicely because otherwise, he said, his mother rips the page out if it's not nicely written.

Mme Malavoy did not consider Yann to be an anxious child and felt he was quite at ease in the classroom. She believed he was engaging with his learning more effectively as the year progressed, listening more carefully and contributing more analytically and critically in class debates than at the beginning of the year.

End of year

Mme Malavoy reported that Yann continued to be much liked by his peers. She added that she had not known him to have any conflicts with the other children in the class.

He's never the last to be picked when children are choosing members for their teams. He's not at all rejected and he's never criticised by the others. He's an easy-going child, he's laid-back. All of the children like him. He's always smiling, he never gets worked up and he's funny.

She felt that his self-esteem was very high even though at times he appeared to criticise himself for taking longer to finish his work than the other children. She felt that the PSCE activities had helped him 'to open up to the other children' in the class. At the beginning of the year he had preferred to work by himself, now he was participating more in group work and exchanging in a richer way:

I noticed that in the beginning of the year, he was fairly self-centred. He was someone who liked the others, but I think it's more related to his work. Now I find that he interacts a lot more with others in the class. Perhaps he is more open to the others. ... I often see him exchanging with the others, which is something he didn't do so much before.

Yann also believed that the PSCE activities had modified his behaviour towards others. He spoke of how his attitude had changed towards one boy in the class, Jocelyn, who was often criticised and at times rejected by the other children in the class:

There was someone in the class whose name is Jocelyn. Well, everyone, how can I explain it, everyone would criticise him like that, just because he's a bit different from the others, because...well, because he's a bit fat. I think it's because of that. After [the PSCE activities], I learned to work with him and now I get along well with him. Sometimes I defend him a little bit because I see that some of the others criticise him and he doesn't like that. I don't think it's very nice of them to do that.

[I think it really was because of the PSCE activities.] When we do these activities, it allows us to see that the other person doesn't always have bad ideas. In the beginning you think to yourself 'he's a little fat, so that means he's a complete loser' and that he'll only make mistakes. But in fact, that's not true, because he had good ideas and in fact he's nice.

Increases in Yann's scores on the self-esteem questionnaire can be seen in every subscale area with the exception of the general self-esteem subscale. This decrease is linked to decreases on two questions. The first, to which he answered 'I never feel uncomfortable saying things in front of the teacher' in September changed to 'I feel uncomfortable saying things in front of the teacher' in June. Yann linked this change to an assignment the children had just

accomplished in which they were required to present a short news report in an interesting way in front of the class. He had found the activity difficult and was especially afraid of the reactions of his classmates.

It was as if we had to speak in front of a bunch of people we didn't know for the first time, even though it wasn't really the first time. Normally, we shouldn't have been so afraid but there, I don't know why, it was just natural. ... [My answer was really linked to this particular activity] reporting the news. It's not the same thing when we just have to say things in class like that. It's especially when we have to present something in front of the whole class that it's a bit hard. Because all the while you are wondering 'what are they going to say' and you're really not so sure of yourself.

In September, Yann had expressed a desire not to have to wear glasses. Now he reported that he felt comfortable wearing glasses and believed they contributed to his identity. While he felt more positive about his physical appearance, however, he was less confident about his academic ability. He reported that there were other boys in the class who were more 'intelligent' than him and wished this were different:

Take Bastien, for example. He's the most intelligent one in the class, let's just say, I find that Bastien is a little bit superior to me. I don't like that because I'm his friend but on the other hand, I still feel a bit excluded because I'm not as intelligent as he is. And now Bastien has another friend, Samuel. He's also my friend but, well, Samuel is also more intelligent than me, which means that I'm left out even more.

Yann said he had been 'shocked' to discover that Bastien did not receive any help with his schoolwork from his parents and yet was able to excel in class whereas Yann felt his results were linked to the fact that his parents helped him with his schoolwork all of the time. Although clearly worried about his academic performance, he had the ability to identify that individuals have both strengths and weaknesses:

I noticed that his [Bastien's] weak points are crafts, sports, all of that stuff. It's just not his thing. I am as good, or better, than him in everything that revolves around sports, art and all that. He's mostly good at maths and reading, but when we do painting ...I apply myself more. So he has strong points and weak points and so do I.

Despite the negative comparisons articulated by Yann during the interviews, his subscale scores in academic areas of reading, maths and learning had increased. He attributed this to his raised awareness of the importance of learning and to having understood how to learn better:

Now that we've seen how you can learn, I find it's good to learn. Thanks to that, you can also do ...you can have a better future than others who won't be able to. Working hard at learning is a good thing.

In September Yann had answered 'I sometimes feel pleased with myself', in June he answered 'I feel really pleased with myself'. He attributed this change to giving up gymnastics, an activity in which he often had doubts about himself:

When I would do an exercise, sometimes I was pleased with myself, and sometimes I wasn't. Now, when I do something, since I am less worried about gymnastics, because the instructor was really strict, I have more confidence in myself.

Conclusion

Despite a slight decrease on the general self-esteem subscale, Yann's self-esteem generally remained high. The decrease seems to be linked to some self-doubt when he compared his academic performance with two other boys in the class. Yann perceived Bastien to be more intelligent and, given that academic success was very important to him (and to his parents), he wished he could change this. There has been evidence suggesting that as children mature, they become more aware of social comparison and consequently may experience a drop in self-esteem (Harter, 1999). Harter underlines the children's increasing ability to make social comparisons and points to the increase of social comparisons also made by teachers and parents as children progress through middle childhood to adolescence (1999).

Yann, in general, appeared able to find a balance between his positive and negative traits, which Harter refers to as 'the ability to coordinate self-representations' (p.54). In this way children are able to recognise that they possess both positive and negative attributes, which is thought to lead to a more balanced view of the self.

Yann also seemed to possess some of the necessary social skills which made him likeable and appreciated by his classmates. He was easy-going, nice to other children, smiley and funny. Whilst he spoke of making friends easily, the PSCE activities seemed to enhance Yann's opportunities for understanding his peers and becoming more tolerant of some children. The teacher had also noticed that the activities encouraged Yann to be less pre-occupied by his academic studies and to take greater interest in others in the class. This suggests that children with high self-esteem also benefit from the PSCE activities and can also act as role models for others with regards to pro-social behaviours in the classroom.

Key Issues

- Children can experience a decrease in self-esteem as their awareness of social comparison increases (Crabtree & Rutland, 2001; Monteil & Huguet, 2002). However, children with high self-esteem have the ability to balance their positive and negative attributes in order to maintain an overall positive balance (Harter, 1999). They are aware of their negative traits but also engage in a positive self-talk which reinforces their positive view of themselves.
- Children with high self-esteem also benefit from PSCE practices and activities. These activities might provide the opportunities for children to open up to other children, including children who are victims of peer rejection. They also can help increase personal responsibility and raise consciousness which can reinforce a child's positive sense of self in a less self-centred way.
- Children with high self-esteem possess certain social skills which allow them to easily make friends and be accepted within the classroom. In addition to this, children who possess these social skills tend to have positive expectations of the outcomes of their behaviour (Ladd, 2005) as mentioned by Yann: 'I am always able to make new friends ...simply by being nice'.

DISCUSSION

The key issues emerging from the case studies of the focus children resonate strongly with findings from previous research into self-esteem, particularly in relation to the role of the teacher, the influence of peer relationships, and the nature of the parent-child relationship.

In this study, the teacher could often be identified as playing a crucial role in the positive development of children's self-esteem. In the case studies of Mégane, Mélissa, Bryce and Jérôme, their teacher appeared to contribute to their developing self-esteem either through accepting, valuing and supporting them by providing opportunities for them to take on classroom responsibilities, or by implementing PSCE practices within the curriculum which allowed the children the space to gain greater awareness of themselves and of others, and gave them a voice. In Céleste's case, it was the intervention of the teacher which led to additional learning support being provided which also helped Céleste's parents to understand better their child and her needs.

The case studies have highlighted the importance of good peer relationships. The lack of social skills had proved a barrier to peer acceptance and approval in the cases of Bryce, Mégane and Jérôme. Becoming more socially adept had led to greater peer acceptance for Bryce and Jérôme and may have contributed to the increases in self-esteem recorded for these two children. Mégane, on the other hand, struggled to gain peer acceptance. She experienced difficulties in changing negative patterns of behaviour and was unable therefore to break the cycle of peer rejection. In the cases of Céleste her level of self-esteem appeared to be influenced by the acquisition of a friend. Céleste attributed some of the positive changes in the way she felt about herself to having recently made a close friend.

The range of PCSE practices employed by the two teachers were identified by both the teachers and the children as valuable in providing curriculum time for peer interactions to take place, developing children's social skills and fostering a culture of inclusion in the classroom. For many of the case study children, the activities provided a means to communicate with and learn about the other children which contributed to a sense of class cohesion. Children such as Mélissa, Yann and Mégane felt they had made progress with regards to their views of other children which they felt had led them to a greater acceptance and tolerance of others. Bryce and Jérôme were able to come into contact physically with other children in the class which may have contributed to a greater acceptance on the part of the other children. Although during the year Bryce and Mégane had experienced some forms of peer rejection during the PSCE activities, near the end of the year they both highlight the PSCE activities as something which acted as bridge between them and the other children.

Parental support featured strongly in the evolution of children's self-esteem over the year, as illustrated by the cases of Mégane and Céleste. In Megane's case, the time-consuming professional obligations of her parents meant she was often at home on her own and spent little time with her parents. It may have been that the lack of parental support and approval contributed to her difficulties establishing positive relationships with her peers (Liebermann et al., 1999). Some feelings of unworthiness might cause children to use 'attention-drawing strategies' in an attempt to gain approval. Studies on social skills and peer competence have underlined these types of strategies, such as when a child tries to draw attention to themselves by talking about themselves or by diverting the attention of a group to something else (Harter, 1999; Putallaz & Gottman, 1981, in Ladd, 2005).

With Céleste, the increase in parental understanding and support of her needs, once she was diagnosed as having a learning disability and was provided with additional academic support, seemed to improve the way she felt about herself. The influence of parents is not necessarily always a positive one (Coopersmith, 1967; Harter, 1999). The high expectations of Yann's parents and their insistence on perfection may have contributed to the slight drop in Yann's self-esteem which seemed to be linked to his self-comparison with two boys he deemed as 'more intelligent' than him,

The case study data also revealed the role of self-efficacy in the fostering of positive self-esteem. Children such as Bryce and Jérôme, through the PSCE activities, gained awareness of their behaviour and of its consequences and were able to work to modify these behaviours. Their new behaviours were reinforced when they received positive feedback from their peers and led to a sense of mastery (Bandura, 1997). The idea that individuals' self-beliefs act as a filter could also be seen in the case of Mégane who was unable to alter her self-beliefs with regards to the way the other children perceived her. Many times, Mégane expressed beliefs that her situation was due to outside influences which were beyond her control. However, near the end of the year she seemed to gain an awareness of some of her behaviours which may have been preventing her from gaining in peer acceptance.

This chapter has presented the individual case studies of six of the twelve focus children based on interviews conducted with the teachers, parents and focus children, as well as the observation and self-esteem questionnaire data. It has provided an in-depth view of the lived classroom world of these six children and has facilitated the identification of key issues relating to the determinants of their self-esteem. The final chapter of this thesis synthesises the findings from the different strands of this study, considers the implications of these findings for theory, policy and practice and discusses how the research undertaken in this study could be built on to enhance further our understanding of self-esteem and the role which can be played by teachers to develop the self-esteem of their students.

CHAPTER 7: DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this research was to explore and understand the role of personal, social and citizenship education (PSCE) in fostering positive self-esteem in two classrooms of 7-11 year old children located in France. The **central question** explored was:

How might teachers use practices linked to Personal, Social and Citizenship Education, - which aim to encourage children to value their identity and respect themselves and others, to develop a capacity for empathy and listening, to work co-operatively and to be responsible for themselves and for their community- to raise children's self-esteem in the French primary school?

In particular the study aimed to investigate the following questions:

- **How does self-esteem develop/evolve in the primary classroom?**
- **What are the factors which contribute to an increase or decrease in children's self-esteem in the classroom?**
- **What influence, if any, do certain PSCE practices have on children's self-esteem?**

This research was conducted through in-depth case studies in two classes in two different primary schools in France from September 2007 to July 2008. A mixture of quantitative and qualitative data collection tools were employed including questionnaires, interviews and observations. This final chapter discusses the key findings of the research. It then considers implications for theory, policy and practice. Finally, areas for further research are suggested.

CONTRIBUTION TO THE BODY OF KNOWLEDGE

There has been a paucity of studies in France into the area of children's self-esteem in the primary classroom. This study addresses this gap in research by investigating the factors which may enhance or diminish levels of self-esteem. The use of case study enabled close and detailed scrutiny of the interplay of these factors within the primary classroom and the data

gathered provides evidence of the possible benefits of integrating PSCE practices into the classroom in France.

The study also contributes to the existing small body of empirical research in the area of Personal, Social and Citizenship Education (PSCE). Many claims have been made previously with regards to the benefits of various PSCE practices but are mainly supported by anecdotal evidence. The lack of empirical evidence has invited criticism and questioning from the educational community with regards to the necessity and benefits of PSCE in the primary curriculum. Although the quantitative data supplied by the self-esteem questionnaire did not show statistically significant evidence of increases in children's self-esteem between the case study classes in which the PSCE activities were implemented and the control classes, the findings which emerged through the qualitative measures provide evidence of the potentially positive outcomes of PSCE activities and contribute to the identification of important aspects with regards to the role of the teacher in their implementation.

The study also raises the issue of the much broader implications linked to the implementation of PSCE practices in the primary classroom which extend beyond increased self-esteem. Although the main focus revolved around the possible influences such practices might have on children's self-esteem, the interview data provided evidence that the PSCE practices, had contributed to the development of other valuable skills and attitudes. Among these skills were: the ability to listen to and understand others, the ability to express feelings and to explain and discuss various behaviours, the ability to cooperate and to resolve conflict in non-violent ways, the ability to decentre and to reflect critically on controversial issues, the ability to assume responsibility for oneself and for different areas off classroom life. It could be said that these skills contribute to fostering positive human relations firstly on an individual level but also on a broader level in relationship to children's perception of and actions in their own home environment and communities.

This study also contributes to the continuing debate as to whether self-esteem can and should be measured. The tenuous and complex nature of the concept of self-esteem and the lack of methodological agreement on how to define and measure it raise the question of the usefulness of the concept. This area is addressed in the discussion on the strengths and weaknesses of the research.

However, this study would suggest that a particular measure of self-esteem can be seen as an indication of an individual's self-perception and evaluation at one given point in time. In this respect, observing an actual increase or decrease may not be the most important issue at hand. Instead, what might be more interesting and illuminating is using the given measure to understand a certain phenomenon and the events contributing to certain self-feelings and evaluations. This is in line with Harter's suggestion that 'self-evaluations, including global self-worth, are very salient constructs in one's working model of the self and, as such can wield powerful influences on affect and behaviour.' The challenge, she suggests, is 'to develop models that identify the specific antecedents of different outcomes, while preserving the critical role of self-representations as phenomenological mediators' (p.315).

As Chapter 2 discussed, the role of significant others was found to be crucial to the development of children's self-esteem. The following sections address this influence.

THE INFLUENCE OF SIGNIFICANT OTHERS

Parents

The data from this study provided evidence of the influential role of parental support in the development and evolution of children's self-esteem. Different types of parental support (or lack of parental support) were identified in this study as influencing children's self-esteem such as the quality of parental care (e.g. the degree to which carers are responsive, loving and supportive) and the types of child-rearing practices and family psychological characteristics (such as expectations and encouragement). This supports previous findings which emphasise parental behaviours as being critical to the development of children's self-esteem (Coopersmith, 1967; Harter, 1999; and Hattie, 1991). In particular, Harter (1999) has identified low parental support as contributing to low self-worth in children and highlights this factor as one predictor of adolescent depression.

1. Parental involvement

The parents of the high self-esteem focus children in this study displayed high, but non-intrusive, levels of parental involvement. They consistently referred to providing support for their children (by being present, by encouraging or complimenting them, by 'guiding' them) and mentioned the importance of attaining a balance with respect to the various types of

support provided: allowing the children to make their own mistakes; letting them get on by themselves, for example by not accomplishing tasks in their place or by letting them work at finding answers to their questions instead of simply giving them the answer, telling them what they are not doing well and how they could improve. In contrast, there was evidence of some lack of support and involvement on the part of some low self-esteem children's parents. For example, some parents of low self-esteem children were frequently absent from the home, expected considerably high levels of autonomy from their children and did not provide support with homework or reported difficulties praising or encouraging their children. The majority of the parents of the low self-esteem focus children displayed a combination of these behaviours. These findings are in line with Mruk's suggestion that parental involvement with the child is perhaps 'the single most important parental or primary caregiver attitude affecting the development of self-esteem in children' (1999, p. 72) and reflects prior research linking parental indifference and frequent parental absences to lower levels of self-esteem in children (Clark & Barber; 1994; Coopersmith, 1967; Rosenberg, 1965).

However, the issues are complex as indicated by an exception to this pattern whereby the parents of one low self-esteem focus child had reported providing a significant amount of support for him (being present, encouraging, taking interest in his hobbies and projects) and yet were at a loss as to how they might increase his self-esteem. There are thus multiple factors at play.

2. Parental acceptance

The interview data gathered from the parents and the children indicated that the level of acceptance of some of the parents of the low self-esteem focus children was lower than that displayed by parents of higher self-esteem children.

Parental acceptance has been highlighted as another important way in which parents influence their child's self-esteem. Mruk (1999) defines 'acceptance' as 'being valued by others for who one is' emphasising that 'the term acceptance is used most often to describe a parent's willingness to see a child's strengths and weaknesses, or to be aware of each child in terms of his or her potential and limitations' (p.73). Harter endorses this assertion stating that 'support in the form of approval and validation for oneself as a person is, understandably, most highly related to self-worth' and emphasises the critical role of parental support especially 'throughout the periods of childhood and adolescence' (p.193).

3. Parental expectations

The parents of some of the low self-esteem focus children held unreasonable expectations (spending long periods of time alone at home, preparing meals for oneself, being responsible for siblings, autonomy with regards to school work at a very young age) especially with regards to autonomy and responsibility.

This supports previous evidence suggesting that parental expectations which are clearly defined and realistically appropriate given the child's age, development and abilities contribute to developing positive self-esteem in children (Coopersmith, 1967; Mruk, 1999; Harter, 1999). Research into children's social competence has indicated that higher autonomy support in parent-child relationships (parents encouraging their child's independence) improves children's social competence (Denham et al., 1990) whereas extremely high or unrealistic parental expectations, including demanding extreme independence (excessive or age-inappropriate amounts of self care), can be linked to a decrease in feeling of self-worth in children (Harter, 1999) and to children's social difficulties (Hodges, Finnegan, and Perry, 1999).

4. Parental influences on children's social competence and skills

There were various ways in which the parents in this study influenced their children's social competence and skills. For example, several of the parents of the high self-esteem focus children described ways in which they directly monitored their children's peer relations. Other parents of high self-esteem focus children reported ways in which they acted as 'designers' in relation to the child's peer relations, including encouraging the child to participate in extra-curricular activities and providing feedback on their child's social skills. There is an increasing body of research highlighting parents'/carers' role in the acquisition and development of children's social competence and skills. As mentioned in Chapter 2 research has found that parents may act as designers, mediators, supervisors, and consultants to their children with regards to the development of their social competence (Ladd, 2005). This element is important given the increasing influence peers have on children's self-esteem beginning in middle childhood and continuing into adulthood (Harter, 1999; Ladd, 2005; Mruk, 1999). Ladd (2005) suggests that parents and carers influence children's social competence in both indirect and direct ways:

Families influence children's competence with peers 1) **indirectly** by modelling, shaping, or otherwise affecting socializing skills, skills deficits, or behavioural excesses during everyday family interactions, relationships, and activities (for example, parents' child-rearing styles, marital interactions, and disciplinary practices) and 2) **directly**, by attempting to prepare children for the peer culture or influence their competence and success in this domain.

(Ladd, 2005, pp 213-214)

Although certain types of parental support with regards to the parents of the high self-esteem focus children have been emphasised, this relationship should be seen as one of the many possible factors contributing to the development of positive self-esteem in the focus children but cannot be regarded as causal in itself. As Emler (2001) and Mruk (1999) have underlined, numerous factors are thought to play a role in the development of positive self-esteem. It may be possible that some of the parents of the low self-esteem focus children were providing some forms of support but that other variables, such as low ability or lack of success in areas which held importance for the children, individual personality differences or low levels of peer acceptance or approval, played a greater role in the development of these children's self-esteem. Harter (1999) highlights the fact that some children are not able to benefit from their parents' 'unconditional support' due to the weight of the peer culture and debilitating effect of negative evaluations from the 'generalized other' (p.208). As Mruk (1999) poignantly states:

Although children and their families are often accepting of themselves and their abilities in the early years, the world of middle childhood is an unforgiving place by comparison. It is filled with evaluations of motor, social, intellectual, personality and behaviour characteristics. The classroom, the playground, and all the peer related activities after school are arenas for a comparison of abilities and traits according to the external, and usually less accepting, standards of teachers and peers. (p.173)

Peers

Much of the data obtained through the interviews with the focus children and the class teachers provided evidence of the importance of the children's peer relations on their self-esteem. High self-esteem focus children were reported as being well liked and as getting on well with their classmates. In addition to this, the high self-esteem focus children reported that they found it easy to make friends and generally enjoyed playing with other children, whereas some of the low self-esteem focus children reported having difficulties obtaining peer approval and support and maintaining friendships. The picture amongst medium self-esteem

focus children was mixed, with some providing evidence of a lack of peer acceptance and approval and others who appeared to have good levels of peer support.

Harter (1999) identifies the increasing importance to self-worth that support and approval from peers takes on during late childhood and adolescence. In addition, she suggests that children's perceptions of their competence with peers contribute to their sense of self-worth (Harter, 1998, in Ladd, 2005). Humphrey (2003) found peers 'to be a source of low self-concept and self-esteem' in particular if 'problems of bullying and teasing were a recurring theme' (p.132). It has been suggested that peer rejection can have a strong influence on children's developing sense of self and that such experiences may perpetuate feelings of unworthiness for the victims (Ladd, 2005). In this respect, low self-esteem was identified as both a cause and a consequence of peer victimisation (Egan & Perry, 1998). This idea of 'reciprocity' with regards to approval and support from peers and feelings of self worth was reported by Felson and Zielinski (1989) who suggested that 'support increases self-esteem, which increases support (or perceived support), which in turn increases self-esteem' (p.219).

There was some evidence from the study that increases in peer acceptance and meaningful friendships may have had a positive influence on some of the focus children's self-esteem. Certain focus children, who reported increased levels of peer support also reported feeling more positive about themselves. However, the importance of peer relations on children's self-esteem also emerges in particular in the cases where children were unable to garner support from peers and where peer victimisation was present. For example, one child, who had failed at several attempts to initiate and maintain friendships thus remaining a victim of peer victimisation, struggled to alter highly negative perceptions of herself. As Stanley and Arora (1998) emphasise, continuous social exclusion of this type has been shown to have lasting negative consequences on children's global self-worth. Some of the low self-esteem focus children reported lack of peer support throughout the school year and provided evidence that such lack of support may have negatively influenced their self-esteem. One focus child remained in a cycle of peer victimisation throughout the school year, supporting findings from previous research that children who have been victims of peer rejection have difficulties breaking this cycle (Ladd, 2005). There was evidence in the case studies that the forces playing into the cycle of peer victimisation may have been found not only among the group of peers responsible for the victimisation but also with the focus children themselves whose

behaviours seemed to act as a catalyst to the cycle confirming previous findings linked to the origins of peer victimisation (Ladd, 2005).

Teachers

Throughout much of the literature on raising self-esteem in the classroom there is agreement on the important role that teachers play and, in particular, the role that teachers' acceptance of their students plays (Burns, 1982 ; Gurney, 1988 ; Humphrey, 2003 ; 2004 ; Lawrence, 2006). Through examination of the data collected during the various interviews and classroom observations, the following ways in which the teachers appear to have influenced the children's self-esteem were identified. What is noteworthy, but as might be expected from adults in a professional role, is that the teachers' behaviours were applied to all children regardless of their levels of self esteem. Thus, the strategies described below applied to all of the class. However, within each strategy the teachers took an individualised approach. High, medium and low self-esteem children were recognised and encouraged but in different areas and through different means according to each child's strengths and successes.

1. Teachers' relationship with students

There was evidence that the teachers' involvement and concern for the students contributed to positive self-esteem and an increase in self-confidence in some of the focus children. Data from the interviews with the focus children and with the parents of the focus children, as well as classroom observation data, highlighted various ways in which the teachers provided support. One of the ways in which teachers positively influenced students was by providing **individualised** support. This took on many forms including personalised written comments in notebooks, homework assignments and assessments, time spent individually with the children reviewing their successes and future objectives and individualising classroom work according to knowledge of children's particular needs. The data highlighted the teachers' attitudes of acceptance as well as their desire to value the children individually. This applied to both low, medium and high self esteem children and could be seen in various ways in the classroom such as through their individualised written comments, their exchanges with students during lessons and their availability for additional support during independent work sessions.

The teachers' use of *realistic* praise and encouragement to foster and acknowledge children's successes also emerged as an important factor in the promotion of the children's self-esteem.

This meant recognising any success or progress the children had made whilst at the same time being honest about areas in which the children were lacking or needing improvement. Dweck (2000) points to such behaviour as a key to facilitating positive self-esteem explaining :

This is how we can help our students have high self-esteem. We can be candid about what their skills are now, about what skills they will need to pursue their goals in school and in life, about what they need to do to build those skills- and then we can offer our aid in equipping them with the attitudes, work habits, and learning strategies they need. (p. 129)

Humphrey (2004) has also referred to ‘accepting’ and ‘valuing’ students as two of the most important teacher behaviours in relationship to the facilitation of a positive sense of self. Valuing children’s successes includes taking into account ‘the skills, knowledge and experiences of all students, including those with different learning styles and access needs’ (p. 353). In this way, Humphrey argues, ‘students are actively rewarded for all their successes, whether these are in traditional subjects or not’ (p. 353). The case studies also provided evidence that teachers displayed attitudes of respect toward the children. The teachers actively listened to all of the children regardless of their level of self-esteem and provided opportunities for them to express themselves.

2. Promotion of responsibility and self-efficacy

The practice of giving children responsibilities, combined with praise and recognition for positive accomplishments, appeared to have contributed to children’s feelings of self-worth. These responsibilities were embedded in a climate of trust and accountability. Receiving praise or recognition from the teacher and/or the other students appeared to contribute to the students’ positive feelings of self-worth.

Both teachers had made use of goal setting and student self-evaluation, though in different ways. The practices which form the basis of Institutional Pedagogy, such as the behaviour belts and contracts, provided specific guidelines for behaviour and objectives towards which the children could work. Success was rewarded by praise from the peer group which perhaps facilitated the internalisation of feelings of self-worth. For example, a low self esteem boy who was given the opportunity to preside over the Class Council appeared to increase in confidence as a result. At Ecole du Centre, the monthly self-evaluations conducted by the students and discussed individually with the teacher also provided regular feedback and recognition of achievements and progress made by the children. These findings support

Burns' (1982) suggestion that teachers may positively influence their students' self-esteem by helping them to set and achieve goals and by helping them to internalise these successes by encouraging realistic self-praise.

As Humphrey (2003) and Burns (1982) have suggested, the 'firm', 'consistent', 'compassionate' enforcement of rules emerged as an important tool in the facilitation of positive self-esteem in children. With regards to the link between limit setting and the development of self-esteem, Burns stresses that:

The teacher's setting of limits in a form that can serve as guidelines to students promotes the development of a positive self-concept and of high self-esteem by providing the students with standards for judging conduct, avoiding censure and establishing expectations and roles for achieving success. (pp. 394-395)

The teachers in the study provided limits and guidelines on acceptable classroom behaviour in a firm and consistent way. Children were allowed a large amount of freedom during certain contexts such as being able to talk to classmates during group work or spending time in the reading area or with the class animal when work was finished but in turn were responsible for not disrupting the other children in the class. Rules concerning tolerance and respect for other children in the class were firmly enforced, particularly in cases where teasing or insults occurred. Often the teacher made reference to the written rules which were displayed in the classroom. The teachers also had high expectations with regards to children's efforts and the ways in which they organised their work. This structure of expectations created a reassuring climate for the children. Being aware of these expectations possibly allowed the children the freedom to focus on accomplishing their work in a non-threatening way.

3. Implementation of PSCE activities

Apart from the content of the PSCE activities, how the teachers implemented them was crucial. Several factors emerged as important. The teachers believed that the effectiveness of the discrete PSCE activities was heightened by integrating the skills learned into other curriculum subjects. Through the many links made across the curriculum, the activities gained in meaning for the children and provided opportunities for them to transfer and apply their new knowledge and skills to some classroom situations and contexts outside of the school (practising tolerance, accepting children who are different, resolving conflicts through discussion).

Careful planning in terms of inclusion in the timetable and planning of progression and schemes of work could be identified as important factors in helping the children to understand and benefit from such practices. The need for continuity of delivery with regards to the adult implementing the activities also emerged as an essential aspect of the implementation of the practices underlining the importance of a relationship of trust and acceptance on the part of the facilitator of the PSCE activities.

Effective management and organisation of the PSCE activities was essential to avoid possibilities for peer rejection. For example, some activities where children were allowed to choose their partners resulted in exclusion of children already receiving low levels of peer support. This was also the case during certain class council sessions which were not being closely managed by the teacher. The role of the teacher in mediating the activities to ensure inclusion and full participation is thus crucial.

THE INFLUENCE OF PSCE PRACTICES ON CHILDREN'S SELF-ESTEEM

Providing a space

The focus children, their parents and the teachers had emphasised the lack of opportunities for self-expression and communication within the traditional curriculum in many classrooms. The implementation of the various PSCE practices created a space in the curriculum in which children were allowed to express themselves, could practise communication skills, have positive contact with their peers and be valued, regardless of their status or past history. Children who had been struggling in the classroom, either academically or socially, were able to make positive contributions in group activities which gave them opportunities to be valued and to feel they had a place in their classroom, fostering a culture of inclusion in the classroom as suggested by Humphrey (2003).

Expression

The space created by the implementation of PSCE practices provided opportunities for the children to freely express themselves, to have a voice and to be heard. During some activities, children were able to share information about themselves which they felt was meaningful. In other activities children were able to signal conflicts or problems they were experiencing in

the classroom and were encouraged collectively to find solutions for these situations. This is in line with previous studies on PSCE, in particular Circle Time, where children reported that such activities had provided opportunities for them to express themselves which did not exist during other lessons (Taylor, 2006). In line with previous studies, such exchanges appeared to lead to more positive interactions for low self-esteem children and increased peer acceptance in the classroom, a finding previously identified in the literature (Lown, 2002; Taylor, 2006).

Peer interaction

Some of the PSCE activities implemented during the year provided children a means to communicate with and learn about the other children in the classroom. This led some of the focus children to adjust their views of some of their peers. The focus children's accounts provide evidence that greater tolerance and acceptance of children in the classroom resulted. Some of the low, medium and high self-esteem focus children specifically mentioned that the PSCE activities helped to break down communication barriers between them and other children in the class and that this in turn had dissipated their anxieties and fears and had led them to feel more comfortable about opening up to others, a finding reflected in Taylor's (2006) study on Circle Time in which the children emphasised the positive effect that getting to know the other children in the class had had on their relationships and behaviour.

Some of the low self-esteem focus children who were struggling to gain in peer acceptance and approval found that the PSCE activities acted as a 'bridge' which connected them to other children and allowed them to be able to make contact with them. It would seem that these children had fallen into a negative pattern in which contact with peers had habitually become negative or aggressive. While some of these children displayed physically or verbally aggressive behaviour, others were ignored or excluded. The PSCE activities gave the children the opportunity to come into contact in a non-violent way; the interview data suggest that this may have contributed to greater feelings of self-worth for these children.

Children had achieved greater levels of peer acceptance and approval as a result of the increased amount of communication and contact between children confirming the positive influence of PSCE activities with regards to peer relations indicated in previous research (Canney & Byrne, 2006; Lown, 2002; Taylor, 2006).

Peer support

The majority of the focus children felt that peer support had increased over the year as a result of the work accomplished during the PSCE activities. Some of the focus children specifically mentioned having changed their attitudes, as well as their behaviour, towards certain children.

The outcome was not positive for all children, however. Two of the focus children, who had previously been victims of peer rejection, were unable even by the end of the year to foster sufficient peer approval or support necessary to the formation of meaningful friendships. There is some evidence that this may have been linked both to deficits in social skills as well as to conditioned negative perceptions and expectations on the part of these focus children. Derosier and Marcus (2005) suggest that, given certain resistances which may exist in groups of children who have developed negative perceptions of victimised children, changes in attitudes and acceptance on the part of the peer group may not be perceptible over shorter periods of time.

Limitations

The positive role played by the PSCE activities in the development of children's self-esteem has been discussed. Some questions, however, remain with regards to the effectiveness of the PSCE activities for *all* children and the sustainability of the effects. One issue for concern that emerged is the danger of public discussion of personal, sensitive issues. During the study one of the focus children mentioned how discussion of personal issues in front of the class made her feel uneasy and vulnerable. This may mean that some children would benefit more from a more private individualised way of working. This issue has been previously highlighted in the literature (Mervis; 1998; Shotten, 1998; Taylor, 2003) and other more private forms of communication, such as the implementation of 'peer pairing', 'circle of friends' and 'bubble time' have been suggested as alternative practices.

As the focus of the study was on the lived world of the classroom, it was not possible to observe whether any increase in self-esteem within the context of the classroom had transferred to other contexts of the children's lives. This raises the question of whether the benefits of the PSCE activities continued 'outside' the classroom. Given the feeling of trust and acceptance reported as being present in the classroom, one may question to what extent children's feelings of self-worth might continue in an environment which is lacking in these.

The extent to which the benefits of such learning carried over into the children's lives outside of the classroom is an area for further research.

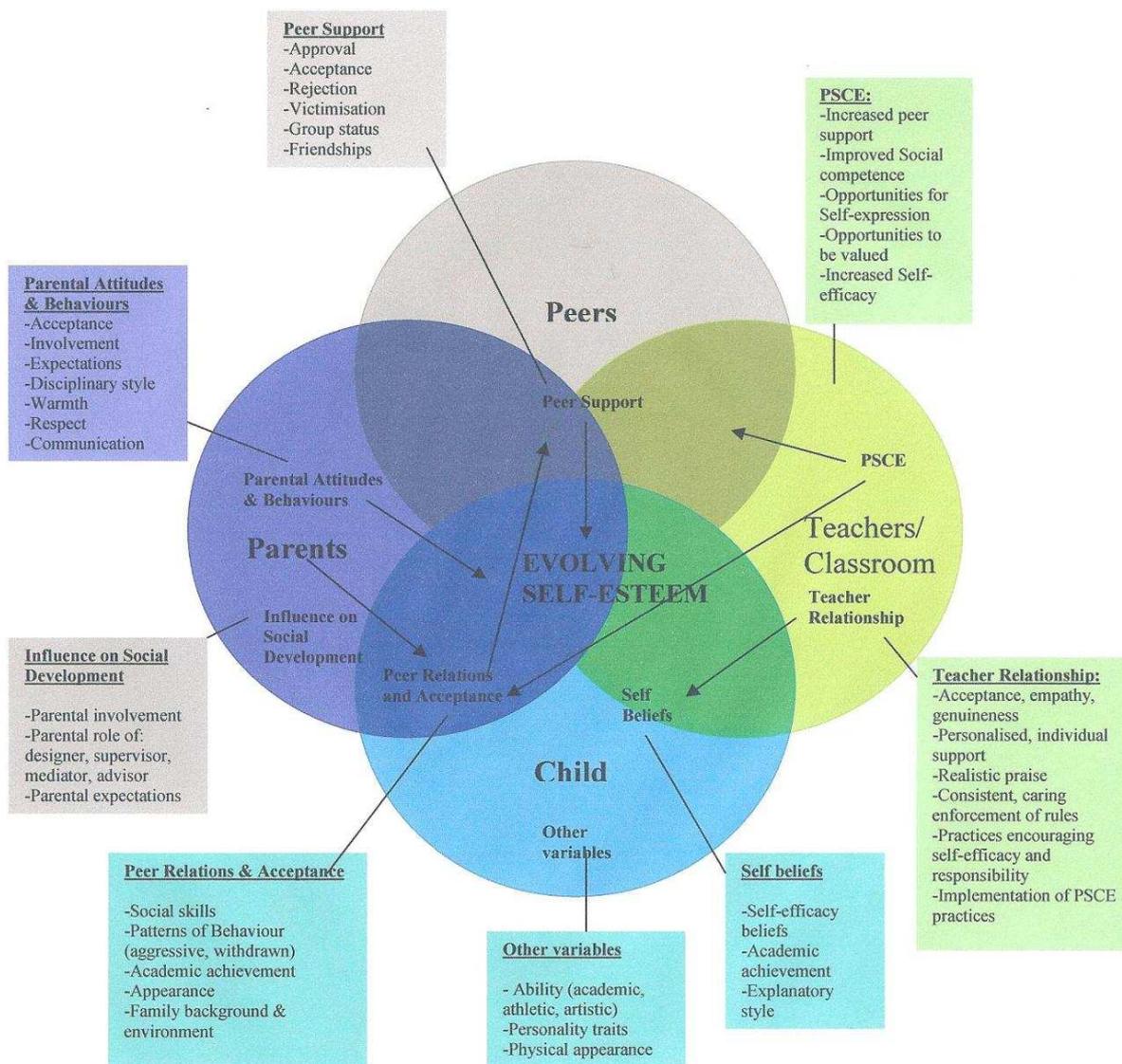
THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

Factors related to positive self-esteem in the classroom

The model presented in Figure 7.1 has been designed to represent the findings of the study and the various influences on children's self-esteem both within the context of the classroom as well as the external variables which play a role in the development of children's self-esteem. The interlocking circles in the model illustrate the influences on children's self-esteem which emerged from the data. These influences were seen as overlapping and building on each other in the various areas detailed by each circle.

As the literature has previously stressed (Coopersmith, 1967; Harter, 1999; Ladd, 2005; Mruk, 1999; Rosenberg, 1965), the influence of parents on children's self-esteem emerged as a salient element in the development of children's self-esteem. Certain parental attitudes and behaviours were seen to provide (or inhibit) a sense of security and feelings of self-worth in children which influenced the development of children's initial level of self-esteem. Parents were also seen to influence the level of social skills of their children which directly affected their relationship with their peers and the amount of peer support they received as suggested by Ladd (2005). As illustrated in the model, these skills were seen as interacting with and adding to other sources thought to contribute to children's feelings of self-worth, namely the amount of support and acceptance provided by peers in the classroom. The evidence in this study suggested that lack of support and acceptance from peers led to decreased feelings of self-worth. In relationship to Cooley's (1902) 'looking glass self' theory, there was evidence that feedback provided by significant others such as parents and peers was internalised by children and contributed to maintaining feelings of high or low self-worth or in some cases to altering these feelings. Findings also supported Harter's (1999) report suggesting that strong support from peers is linked to high levels of self-worth.

Figure 7.1: Factors related to positive self-esteem in the classroom



In the model, teachers are shown as contributing to children’s self-esteem in the classroom in several ways. Caring, accepting and empathetic relationships with children, as suggested by

Rogers (1965) were seen to provide a context of trust and confidence in the classroom. In addition to this relationship, the teachers in this study provided consistent personalised, individual support and realistic praise whilst encouraging self-efficacy and responsibility in the children. It is believed that the combination of these approaches led to increases in self-efficacy in some of the children. The implementation of various PSCE practices were seen to influence 1) children's awareness of and competence in areas relating to social skills, 2) the amount of peer approval and support they received and 3) their self-efficacy beliefs.

PSCE activities are shown as having an influence on children's self-beliefs corroborating Bandura's (1997) theory of self-efficacy which highlights the role played by cognition in individuals' interpretation of events and their ability to modify and perform behaviours. In particular, it provided some support for the hypothesis that modifying children's sense of self-efficacy and providing opportunities for their success in certain areas contributes to increases in self-worth. Moreover, there was support for Humphrey's (2004) suggestion that providing children with opportunities to acquire greater personal responsibility also contributes to increased feelings of worthiness. There was evidence confirming the notion of self-esteem as being multi-dimensional and hierarchical as James (1890) first suggested. It was clear that at times the focus children's sense of self-worth was linked to the importance they placed on particular attributes and their success or lack of success in that area resulted in an increase or decrease in self-esteem.

This model emphasises the interdependence and cyclical nature of the various sources contributing to children's self-esteem. It demonstrates that significant others, including teachers, can influence children's self-esteem in direct ways as well as in indirect ways. The model also suggests that a teacher's relationship, attitudes, efforts and implementation of PSCE activities may not be sufficient to contribute to increases in children's self-esteem given the position of the other sources of self-esteem as indicated in the model.

IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY

The following recommendations highlight the need to place more importance on provision for PSCE in the official French curriculum, the need for sufficient training in the implementation of PSCE practices in initial and continuing teacher education and the importance of certain aspects of classroom practice are crucial to the success of PSCE. However, these

recommendations are dependent to some extent on a shift in the dominant pedagogy in the French system.

In discussing the role of PSCE in curriculum planning and provision of training in France the national cultural context must be taken into consideration. Bruner (1996) draws attention to the transcending nature of culture and cultural values in education stating:

‘For a choice of pedagogy inevitably communicates a conception of the learning process and the learner. Pedagogy is never innocent. It is a medium that carries its own message.’ (p.63)

This can be seen in the discussion in Chapter 1 of the organisational and cultural context of the education system in France. The French educational system and French pedagogy have been built on the republican ideals of freedom, equality, and solidarity (Starkey, 2000). Education, which is meant to serve as the basis for equality is steeped in the tradition of universalism (Osborn, et al., 2000) : teachers thus are expected to treat all children as equal by giving them the same tasks, assessing them in identical ways and maintaining the same standards and expectations for all of them regardless of underlying differences. This principle, which intentionally ignores difference in children stands in contradiction to the essential goals of PSCE as understood in this study. Moreover, the concept of *laïcité* and the emphasis on the acquisition of reason and knowledge appear to leave little room for the implementation of PSCE activities which attempt to enter into the ‘private sphere’ of the students’ personal lives. This can be seen in Audigier and Motta’s commentary on the affective aspect of education in France :

To speak of the affective is to speak of feelings, of a private hidden area of the individual, of something difficult to imagine and define, so that to make it one’s concern is to commit a reprehensible intrusion into the most private area of the individual’s personal life. School should surely confine itself to the spheres of knowledge and reason, to what is universal to us all and not concern itself with this most intimate aspect of individual freedom

(Audigier and Motta, 1998, p.132).

This mistrust of any emotional manifestation in the classroom and the desire to leave students’ personal lives outside the walls of the classroom potentially poses challenges to and raises questions with regards to the place accorded to PSCE in the curriculum and teacher education in France.

However, the findings of this study along with frequent anecdotal evidence provide support for the idea that this framework is not static but rather that it is currently in the process of changing on various levels. Audigier and Motta themselves highlight the illusory nature of this traditional cultural framework stating:

And yet, on closer inspection, there is something unrealistic-illusory or dishonest even-in seeking to keep at a distance something which is so real a part of people's lives at school and of the knowledge being imparted there. **School is not simply an institution where a body of knowledge is transmitted and constructed in an affective vacuum** (emphasis mine). (1998, p. 132)

This seems to reflect the view of the majority of the parents in the study who expressed positive views of the teachers' personalised approaches and were enthusiastic about the opportunities the children were given to express themselves and learn more about each other. Similar attitudes have also been manifested by many of the parents, teachers, student teachers and students with whom I have contact and who are desirous to see certain changes in current pedagogy. Some research (Osborn et al., 1997; Young & Mary, 2008) has also provided evidence of this shift among teachers who, whilst maintaining some national cultural values have also converged towards more open discourses concerning classroom practices. Recent publications (Antibi, 2007; Baumard, 2006; Jacqu e, 2004, Merle, 2005, Monteil & Huguet, 2002) which have called into question the effect of certain practices, such as assessment and humiliation, on children's self-esteem, have also drawn attention to the growing public interest in such issues and to a sense of dissatisfaction for certain current pedagogical models. It appears that there is an increasing number of educators who are actively seeking to implement alternative approaches to classroom management and practices which aim to value all children .

This is a reflection of how the society at large is changing in France. Audigier and Motta (1998) recognise this change but underline that the traditional pedagogical models remain 'present in minds and in discourse' because the structure is:

A convenient way of dealing with difficult problems, because we have no alternative structure which hangs together as well as this one, and because our minds are attracted by this organized structure, even though everyday life is less orderly. (p. 137)

However, this does not exclude the possibility of greater acceptance and openness towards new pedagogical models, but rather underlines the need for reflection on how to integrate newer child-centred pedagogical models into an existing cultural framework.

The suggestions made below recognise the need for an evolution in the dominant pedagogy in the French system whilst at the same time taking into account a growing demand and openness towards pedagogies which take into account the personal and social aspect of education.

The centralised system of Education in France presents one of the areas of difficulty in achieving such an evolution in pedagogy. The Ministry of Education determines the official national curriculum at all levels of schooling as well and is responsible for the planning and development of initial and continuing teacher education. This centralised mode of functioning has an important impact on what teachers and teacher educators will prioritise in their practices. The necessity to shift thinking about what comprises effective teacher training at all levels in order to move towards new pedagogical models is emphasised in the suggestions below.

Creating space in the official curriculum for PSCE

Provision for PSCE in the official curriculum timetable

Whereas the 2007 (Ministère de l'Éducation, 2007) programmes had specifically allotted thirty minutes a week for what was referred to as the 'débat réglé' (forum for discussion), no official provision of time is stipulated for classroom debate or discussion time in the most recent 2009 programmes (Ministère de l'Éducation, 2008). The objectives in the area of PSCE, which have been modified in various respects including the addition of a reference encouraging teachers to positively influence children's self-esteem, revolve around the same principles as the previous objectives. However, lack of specific time requirements makes it difficult for teachers to prioritise an area of the curriculum which is not formally assessed and which can be easily overlooked amidst pressures to reach curriculum goals in traditionally valued subjects such as literacy and maths. It is urgent that educators strive to communicate to policy makers the importance of providing specific time slots in the official timetable for PSCE activities. Not only would this encourage teachers to prioritise these activities, allowing children greater possibilities for all types of success, but it would help to shift the narrow focus, which currently prevails in schools, from being overly concerned with achievement goals to a focus on goals which tend more towards promoting 'human dignity' (Beane, 1994, p.74). As Beane states:

Human beings, including the young, are entitled to a sense of dignity. Therefore, any social institution has the obligation to sponsor experiences that extend the possibility of human dignity and to avoid those that detract from it.

Initial and continuing teacher education

Provision of training

- *More provision for training in the area of PSCE in initial teacher education in France.* Despite teachers' growing interest to learn more about PSCE practices, manifested through informal discussions with both trainee and practising teachers, very little time is currently allocated in the initial teacher education timetable to the PSCE curriculum. Raising awareness of the philosophy behind PSCE practices and presenting research into PSCE and its potential benefits within the ITE programme is the first step necessary in response to this interest.
- *In-service teacher training in the various types of PSCE practices, such as Circle Time, class council, practices linked to Institutional Pedagogy.* Lack of knowledge or practice in the area of PSCE can act as a barrier to the desire to implement these practices (Taylor, 2003). Teachers therefore need to be shown examples of specific types of implementation of various PSCE practices and to be given the opportunity to practise and experiment with the activities themselves outside of the classroom. This could contribute to developing greater enthusiasm and skill with regards to the implementation of PSCE activities.
- *Allowing time and space to raise awareness of the importance of PSCE.* If there is to be a shift in the dominant pedagogy in France, then working in a 'top down' model in which provision is made in the official time table is only the first step. Although this would allow teachers who are already implementing PSCE practices in their classes and those who are currently interested in alternative approaches to teaching the freedom and structure to do so, there is also a strong need to raise awareness among all teachers, including student teachers and teacher educators of the theory behind such practices and the potential benefits for the children. In order to do this, adding a few hours into the current initial teacher education curriculum will not be sufficient. Teachers need to understand the theoretical background and implications of such practices which means increasing the number of hours allotted for the study of child psychology, the importance of the relationship between students and teachers, and the various ways of increasing self-

efficacy and co-operation in the class. However, in order to ensure that this information does not remain purely theoretical, student teachers and practising teachers also need the time and space to reflect on such issues in order to confront their visions of the teacher's role and influence in the classroom with others' visions. This requires allotting sufficient time for the discussion of and reflection on the various areas of PSCE throughout the initial teacher education curriculum and in-service training. This would also imply a co-operative effort on the part of teacher educators from various disciplines in order to make room for such space in the curriculum.

- *Raising awareness of the importance of PSCE among teacher educators in France* At the moment, the entire structure and content of initial teacher education are going through a transitional stage as the University Teacher Training Institutes (IUFM) are being 'integrated' into the universities. The new reforms, if and when they are implemented, situate initial teacher education within a Masters programme completed over the course of two years. The future curriculum guidelines, which for the moment are simply working models put forth by various university committees within a loose framework established by the Ministry for Education, will normally allow for 'complementary training modules' related to the field of education. The general content of these modules will first be defined by the Ministry in the Spring of 2010. The final content of such modules will then need to be approved by the universities themselves. Despite the reigning pessimism with regards to these reforms due to the fear of a lack of adequate training for student teachers, these reforms may also provide the means to allocate sufficient time for training in the area of PSCE which so far has been lacking. Whether modules focussing on PSCE will be created will ultimately depend on the awareness of the importance of such training among teacher educators who will need to collaborate together in the implementation of such modules. One way to raise teacher educators' awareness is through continuing education programmes which aim to inform educators from various disciplines of the importance of actively integrating PSCE into the curriculum and to reflect on ways in which PSCE activities can be implemented in each discipline. In addition, conferences and seminars on the topics of PSCE and self-esteem within the Teacher Training Institutes and Universities would contribute to increasing awareness among educators; a first step towards a shift in the perception of what is essential in initial teacher education.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

Classroom practice

The success of PSCE relies on a combination of pedagogical practices as suggested below. It is crucial to address these issues during initial and continuing teacher education.

1. Teacher/Student Relationship

- *Building/Nurturing an accepting, empathetic relationship with children.* The relationship built between the teacher and the children emerges as pivotal in raising children's self-esteem in the classroom. Much of the success of the PSCE activities relies on trust between the teacher and the children. Teachers need to demonstrate acceptance by allowing children to make mistakes and by making them less alarming. They should also display an interest in the child's individual personal qualities and skills. There are therefore implications for teacher training in terms of addressing the importance of building constructive relationships.
- *Individualised attention and support.* It is essential that teachers provide children with specific types of support. In particular, they should provide individualised support and attention for children through various means which might include the use of personalised spoken or written encouragement, time set aside for additional support for children having difficulties, or particular attention given to listening to children on a regular basis.
- *Valuing all types of children's successes.* Teachers need to pay particular attention to valuing children's accomplishments in the classroom whether these involve progress made in traditional academic areas such as language (French) or maths, accomplishments in others subject areas such as art, sports or music, children's contributions in the classroom as well as their participation in group or project work.

2. Fostering self-efficacy and feelings of responsibility

- *Use of goal setting and self-evaluation.* The use of goal setting is an important way in which teachers can encourage personal responsibility in children and can provide the means to highlight their successes. It is important that goals are discussed and reviewed regularly with the children in order to build on small successes and monitor progress.

- *Conveying an attitude of trust and responsibility.* In order to promote responsibility in the classroom, teachers must allow children to take on various responsibilities while demonstrating their trust in the child's capabilities.
- *Promotion of class or school based projects.* Projects in which children are actively supporting a worthy cause such as collecting food and materials for a homeless shelter or donating books, toys and school supplies for a school with no funding or resources can provide a sense of personal accomplishment which could contribute to feelings of self-efficacy and self-worth.

3. Implementation/scheduling of PSCE activities

- *Regular weekly implementation of one or more PSCE activities.* It is crucial that teachers consistently implement the PSCE activities on a regular basis. This ensures that children become comfortable with certain activities and thus feel less threatened by them. Change in attitudes and behaviours is a gradual process which requires constant support.
- *Careful planning and reflection around specific PSCE objectives.* Planning around specific objectives contributes to conveying greater meaning to the activities. Many of the skills learned through PSCE activities build on one another. Careful planning of activities should allow sufficient time for children to understand and practice important skills, such as listening, recognising and expressing feelings, and building trust, before moving on to other areas. It is also essential to reflect on the current classroom context and relationships between children while planning to implement certain activities which require greater levels of trust or risk-taking.
- *Links throughout the curriculum.* For PSCE practices to be effective they must not be implemented only as isolated activities separate from the rest of the curriculum but rather must be used to make links throughout the curriculum to raise awareness of and consistently promote certain values such as tolerance, compassion, acceptance, and empathy.
- *Sensitivity to children's reactions to certain types of PSCE activities.* Teachers need to be aware that some large group activities are not suitable with all children and that

certain children may benefit from more private individualised interventions. In such cases teachers should use more 'private' forms of communication, such as the implementation of 'peer pairing', 'circle of friends' and 'bubble time'.

- *Teacher's role in mediating practices.* Given the openness and trust required for PSCE activities to be experienced positively by all children, it is crucial that teachers act as mediators throughout the activities. Teachers need to be sensitive to negative or hurtful comments made by children in order to promptly intervene and to enforce and remind children of the pre-established rules based on tolerance and respect for all children. This can help to ensure that all children are respected by their peers and protected from forms of victimisation.
- *Long-term planning/objectives.* It is essential that PSCE practices continue to be implemented over extended periods of time to increase the effectiveness of the practices and ensure long term benefits to some children. Negative perceptions of pre-existing peer behaviour may be resistant to change and although such changes take time, continued social skills improvement over time can lead to increased peer acceptance.

4. Relationship with parents

- It is essential that teachers not only inform parents of the PSCE practices being implemented in the classroom but that they give them an understanding of the philosophy and objectives underpinning the activities. In this way parents and teachers form a partnership with regards to the education of their child. Establishing a relationship and partnership with parents allows teachers to build on skills and competencies that are already being practised in the home and may allow parents the opportunity to reinforce practices occurring within the context of the classroom. In this way, teachers can also endeavour to foster parental support for children. Although this may not always be possible for a teacher to achieve, raising parents' awareness of the important role they can play could be influential in modifying, where necessary, their behaviour towards and expectations of their child.

FURTHER RESEARCH

As a single researcher working under the time constraints within the framework of her doctoral studies, it was only possible to undertake research in a small number of schools and within a fairly tight timeframe. The research was, however, undertaken over the course of a full school year in two different schools and included extensive data collection from pupils, teachers and parents. Given more human and material resources, this study could be developed further in the following areas:

Sample

This research could be expanded by extending the sample size to include a larger number of schools. A larger sample size would allow for closer investigation of changes in children's self-esteem due to the nature of the statistical tests required for the analysis of self-esteem questionnaires. A larger sample would also allow for greater diversity in terms of the schools' size, socio-economic status, and cultural diversity. This would provide important insights into the possible benefits of PSCE practices across diverse contexts.

It could be beneficial in future studies to limit the age range of the children included in the sample. The children in this study fell within the middle childhood age range which had been suggested as sufficiently developmentally advanced for adequate self-reflection (Harter, 1999). However, the difficulty experienced by some of the youngest focus children in responding to some of the interview questions emerged during the interviews. The youngest of the children had some difficulties thinking about events which did not relate directly to them. The difficulty for younger children to 'reflect on and articulate their experiences' has also been discussed by Taylor in her research on the use of Circle Time in the classroom (2006). This suggests that future research might benefit from being conducted with children who are closer to the middle or upper range (9½ to 11) of middle childhood (Harter, 1999).

This study has identified the importance of the family context in determining children's self esteem and it would be interesting to investigate the extent to which gains in self-esteem in the classroom/school context have been translated into the home environment. Conducting additional interviews with the parents/carers of the focus children near the close of the study

could provide valuable data on the possible influence of PSCE in the context of children's home and family life. References to situations outside of the classroom (such as situations at home or during extra-curricular activities) could also be raised with the focus children during the different interviews throughout the year.

Intervention

An important element in the investigation of the influence of PSCE practices on children's self-esteem resides in the implementation of such practices. The benefits of PSCE activities rely on the skills and commitment of the teachers implementing them. It is essential that teachers feel comfortable and confident with the implementation of such practices and that they have had ample time to understand the underpinning concepts and to experiment with different types of activities and approaches. Thus, an important area to consider in future studies would be to ensure that the participating teachers have similar levels of skill in implementing the activities. Interviews conducted with the teachers prior to the intervention would highlight their current knowledge and experience with regards to the implementation of the activities. A period of training in one or several areas of PSCE would then allow the teachers to practice and experiment with various activities, and to reflect on their underlying objectives. Following the training period the teachers could then be interviewed again to determine their level of knowledge and confidence in the implementation of the activities. This would contribute to ensuring that the participating teachers feel well prepared and confident with regards to the implementation of the PSCE practices being investigated.

Focus of the research

This study investigated a range of PSCE practices implemented in two classrooms which were seen to contribute in a positive way to children's self-esteem in various ways. To gain a greater understanding of the impact of individual activities, it could be useful to focus on one activity such as circle time and to observe the implementation of this one activity over the course of a school year. . This would allow closer investigation of the processes taking place within that activity and should facilitate effective identification of what works well and what works less well. A similar approach would be to compare two separate practices in order to illuminate the strengths and weaknesses of the various practices.

The gender differences which emerged during analysis of the self-esteem questionnaires suggested that girls might benefit from PSCE activities more than boys. Although caution has to be exercised, as the sample sizes in this study were quite small, further research to find out whether the differences identified in this study are present in other schools would be valuable and, if were the case, to investigate the reasons for this gendered experience. Some areas to consider are the influence of the teacher's gender on the outcomes of PSCE and any variations in expectations and goals for boys and girls.

Length of study

Much of the research conducted in the area of self-esteem takes place over a short period of time. Although this study was conducted over an entire school year there is some question as to whether more changes might have occurred had the intervention continued over a longer period of time. Previous studies have confirmed that positive changes in behaviour and attitude take place gradually and require a great deal of positive reinforcement over extended periods of time (DeRosier & Marcus, 2005). A longitudinal research project over a number of years studying the implementation and impact of PSCE practices could be of value to this field of research.

Another issue for investigation is whether the attitudes and behaviours learned during PSCE are embedded in the individual and are sustained over time once the intervention has ceased. A follow-up study which includes a pre-test and a post-test over an extended period of time would allow greater understanding of the possible long-term benefits of PSCE.

Personal reflection

This research has enabled me to investigate various aspects of self-esteem in the classroom on a small scale. It has not only illuminated the ways in which teachers may influence their students' self-esteem but has also drawn attention to the interplay between the various potential sources of self-esteem which exist within a child's environment. This has led me to a greater awareness of the importance of fostering positive interactions between children, their parents/carers and their peers. The ways in which various significant others influence children's self-esteem also revealed the limitations of teachers' influence in situations where outside influences are overwhelmingly negative. It has also raised my awareness of the particular cultural context of the educational system in France and had led me to reflect on

ways of actively working towards change within this framework. This study has allowed me to refine my perception of effective implementation of PSCE and has increased my desire to inform practising teachers, student teachers and teacher educators of the benefits and possibilities for implementation of PSCE practices in the primary classroom.

Careful reflection on the process of this research has also allowed me to consider the overall strengths and weaknesses within it. The fact that the research was conducted over the course of a full school year, the multiple sources of data collected from the teachers, focus children and parents, and the large amount of time spent in the classroom were clearly positive and robust elements of the study. These allowed me to build up in-depth case studies of the children, to explore and illuminate the various factors which were thought to have an influence on children's self-esteem and to understand the various positive outcomes of the implementation of the PSCE practices. However, questions revolving around the use of the self-esteem questionnaire and how the data obtained from this questionnaire should be interpreted emerged in the final stages of the research leading me to reflect on various aspects of the concept of self-esteem, and on issues related to its measurement.

The first question raised concerned the importance and value of measuring 'global' self-esteem and the difficulty in measuring the construct due to issues revolving around the stability and instability of self-esteem. Some research has suggested that individuals possess a core sense of self which remains consistent over time but which is also subject to situational changes around this core. This would imply that global self-esteem is more resistant to change over time than situation specific constructs (Hattie, 1992). In addition, it is believed that the foundations of global self-esteem are built during the early stages of life and are based on emotionally significant experiences of which individuals are often unaware. This absence of awareness also contributes to the resistance of global self-esteem to modification (Harter, 1999). Following the findings from the questionnaire data this led me to question whether a quantitative measure of self-esteem such as the BSS would allow elements of change in global self-esteem to be detected. Self-report instruments which measure self-esteem quantitatively record individuals' self-evaluations at one specific moment in time which is also situated within a particular context. This could mean that an individual's self-evaluations might fluctuate depending on the different variables surrounding the context. Jackson (1984) comments on this aspect and difficulty in measuring self-esteem quantitatively:

Self-esteem is not a determinate process like the ones studied in the physical sciences; its nature lies rather in its subjective character and its ever-changing manifestations and implications. Confronted by a phenomenon so elusive and dynamic, the experimental method is, as it were, overpowered. (pp.4-5).

The issues revolving around the complex nature of self-esteem and its measurement also led me to reflect on whether future research undertaken in this area would benefit more from focussing on one specific sub-concept of self-esteem, such as ‘academic self-concept or ‘relations with peers’ self-concept than an investigation into global measures of self-esteem.

These difficulties also provoked thought on the issue of whether raising self-esteem should be the focus of an investigation or whether altering individuals’ self-theories or fostering individuals’ sense of self-efficacy would be more worthwhile areas on which to focus. These reflections have deepened my understanding of the difficulties in researching the area of self-esteem and will serve as important starting points in considering aspects of research in future studies undertaken.

Dissemination

In order to communicate the findings of the study to the teachers and schools involved in the study, a staff development session is planned to be held in each of the two schools. The purpose of these sessions is to inform the teachers and staff of the schools of the findings of the study and to provide some general knowledge of the PSCE practices implemented. A discussion will also be held with the head teachers to decide what information would be appropriate to give the parents and children of the school. This information will be communicated through a letter sent to the parents and children.

Further dissemination will be achieved in the following ways:

- A Masters level module for education students has been added to the University of Strasbourg’s curriculum as a result of the study and will discuss the various concepts addressed in the study as well as the findings and their implications for policy and practice.

- Continuing professional education sessions will be offered during the 2010-2011 school year for practicing teachers and teacher educators which will allow for the presentation of the findings of the study and for presentation and practice in the various types of PSCE activities.
- Aspects of the findings will be disseminated at the upcoming conference on Children's Identity and Citizenship in Europe (CiCe) in May, 2010.
- Several articles on different aspects of the study will be submitted to academic journals within the next year.

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Appendix 1 : Autorisation from local school inspector

Mme
Ecole
PEMF

INSPECTION de , le 04/07/07

6 JUL 2007

A

Monsieur l'Inspecteur de l'éducation
nationale de
s/c M. le Directeur de l'école
de

Monsieur,

- Par la présente je sollicite de votre bienveillance l'autorisation de participer au projet de recherche de Mme Laetitia Mary, doctorante en sciences de l'éducation.
- En effet, cette dernière m'a contactée afin de pouvoir faire des observations en classe pour sa thèse sur l'estime de soi. Vous trouverez ci-joint un projet détaillé de son travail. Les parents seront informés lors de la réunion de rentrée.

Veillez recevoir, Monsieur l'Inspecteur, l'expression de mes sentiments distingués.

*Avec Accord
des Parents
des enfants concerné
Vu et transmis,
Le Directeur
ECOLE*

27/1/2381

*Autorisation accordée, sous réserve de
l'accord des parents. Je vous remercie
de m'indiquer le moment venu, un
exemple des conclusions
de cette étude.*

L'Inspecteur de l'éducation nationale

Le 10/7/2007

M. R. T.

Appendix 2 : French PSCE programmes 2007
(my translation)

<p>Knowledge</p>	<p>By the end of the 3rd cycle (end of Primary School) students should have understood and retained:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -that children have rights and in particular rights with regard to education, safety, and health (U.N. Convention on the rights of the child) -the universal values which may not be compromised (based on the <i>Déclaration des droits de l'homme et du citoyen</i>, in reference in particular to Article 1) -the significance of the principle symbols of the French Republic -the principle institutions of the Republic and its principle territorial divisions -the role of the local elected representatives -the rules of the class and of the school and their significance; knowing what is allowed and forbidden in the classroom, in school and during inter-school time. -the role of the adults who take part in school life -the rights and responsibilities indicated in the school's charter of proper usage of I.T. -those things which contribute to ensuring the child's safety such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The dangers of certain domestic items and the rules of safety which apply to them • Essential transportation safety rules for children travelling on foot, by bicycle, by roller-blades etc... • Rules to follow in the event of an important risk -how to react to an adult aggression -first aid numbers, home phone number and parents' or carers' numbers -the principles of a balanced diet and physical activity
<p>Skills</p>	<p>By the end of the 3rd cycle(end of Primary School) students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -respect the classroom and school rules and to contribute to the development of these rules -consider the consequences of their acts which are disruptive to the life of the group -engage in a discussion concerning the breaking of school regulations either for themselves or for a classmate, to explain or clarify a situation of conflict during allotted discussion time (<i>débat réglé</i>), and to be familiar with steps to take which lead to its resolution. -participate in the elaboration of a group project including occupying various roles in and leading different stages of the project -call for emergency help when necessary, perform simple first aid tasks on a classmate -demonstrate the knowledge and skills required for the certificate of road rules (APER)
<p>Attitudes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -To acquire respect for self and for others, to demonstrate this in the way one speaks -To be conscious of the rights and responsibilities in the classroom and in school -To respect children of the opposite sex and to demonstrate this in words and in act, to respect the places reserved for children of the opposite sex, to respect other's modesty -To know the difference between school life and private life (using discretion with regards to oneself and to one's classmates) -To engage in discussion when confronted with situations of conflict, calling an adult if one is not able to resolve the conflict -To accept the group work offered at school regardless of the context -To have a sense of initiative (for example regarding a group project) -To respect others and to protect oneself in relation to areas of ICT

[The darkened parts of the text indicate knowledge or skills for which mastery is not required at this level. They are part of the programme for all children, and should prepare them to be mastered by the next stage (the end of lower secondary school)]

Appendix 3:Teacher Resource Pack: Activities implemented in case study classes

List of activities:

Back to back (Mosley, p.147; Denis et al., p.75)

Blind sculptors (pp.104-105, Denis et al.)

Body building/forms and letters (p.147, Mosley)

Comfortable Coco (Denis et al., 2000, p.100; *Guess the voice*, Plummer, 2007, p. 40)

The dizzy bottle (Denis et al., 2000, pp.69-70; Lawrence, p. 88)

Draw a conflict (Denis et al., p.86-87)

Feelings sculptures (Denis et al., p.124)

Hands and feet (Denis et al., p.74)

Knock knock (Denis et al., p.121)

Leading the blind (Lawrence, p.87-88; Denis et al., p.66-67; Mosley, p.136)

Mirror talking (Plummer, p.109; Denis et al. p.102; Mosley, p.138)

Moving circles (Staquet, pp.161-163)

Musical balance (Plummer, p.115 adaptation, Denis et al., p.75-76)

Personal flag/coat of arms: (Clough & Holden, p.72; Denis et al., pp. 57-59; Staquet, p.189-190)

Silent greetings (Plummer, p. 44)

Statues (Denis et al., p.103)

Tangles (Denis et al., p.73; Mosley, p.138)

What a ball (Denis et al., pp. 55-56)

Touch something (Staquet, pp.172-173)

The two donkeys (Denis et al., pp. 91-93)

Warm Fuzzies (Staquet, p. 197-198; Denis et al., pp.71-73)

Back to back (Denis et al., 2000, p.75; Mosley, 2005, p.147)

The children are put into pairs. The pairs sit on the floor back to back with their legs outstretched. They then link their arms together at the elbows. When the teacher gives the signal, the pairs must try to stand up together by pressing their backs together.

Follow up questions:

- Were you able to stand up together?
- Why were you unsuccessful?
- What did you do in order to succeed?
- What gets in your way of being co-operative?

Blind Sculptors (Denis et al., 2000, pp.104-105)

The children are seated in pairs facing each other. Each pair is given modelling clay. The children are given time to discuss and decide what they will model together. Then, they are blindfolded and are asked to sculpt together, without talking, the model they have planned. The teacher may play soft music while the children engage in the modelling.

Follow up questions:

- How did you feel during this activity?
- Was it easy to agree on your sculpting project?
- Did you decide in advance how you would carry out the activity?
- How did you go about modelling when you were blindfolded?
- Are you happy with the end result?
- Can you think of any similarities or differences between this activity and times when you have worked in groups?

Body building (Mosley, 2005, p.147)

The children are divided into groups of 4 to 6. The teacher calls out the name of a letter of the alphabet or of an object. The members of the group collectively use their bodies to form the designated letter or object. All members of the group must be part of the structure.

Follow up questions:

- How did you decide on the structure of the form?
- Was it easy to include everybody?
- Did you have to try several times to find the right structure?
- What got in your way of co-operating?

Comfortable Coco (Denis et al., 2000, p.100; [Guess the voice], Plummer, 2007, p. 40)

The children are seated in a circle. One child is selected, stands in the middle of the circle and is blindfolded. When the teacher gives the signal, the child walks to the edge of the circle, sits on another child's lap and asks: 'Is Coco comfortable?' 'Coco' then responds 'Yes, Coco is comfortable'. The child who is sitting on the other's lap must guess who that child is. He may

ask the question three times. Once the children are familiar with the activity, those assuming the role of 'Coco' may modify their voices to increase the difficulty of the activity.

Follow up questions:

- Was it easy to recognise the other children's voices when they responded?
- How did the children who were blindfolded feel during the activity?
- Is it easy to sit on the lap of someone whom you have not identified?

The dizzy bottle (Denis et al., 2000, pp.69-70; Lawrence, p. 88)

It is important that the teacher pay particular attention to the children's safety (physical and psychological) during this security activity. The activity takes place in silence. A minimum of eight children form a tight circle together (shoulders touching) and place one foot slightly behind them in order to remain stable. The teacher asks for a volunteer to be 'the dizzy bottle'. The child who volunteers stands in the middle of the circle. Keeping his/her feet well in the middle of the circle, he/she stiffens his/her body as much as possible and leans towards the circle. The children who form the circle catch the child and gently push him/her in another direction.

Follow up questions:

- How did the child in the middle feel during the activity?
- How the group feel when they were catching the 'dizzy bottle'? Was everyone in the group attentive to the well being of the child in the middle? Why?
- Why did some children not wish to participate?

Draw a conflict (Denis et al, 2000, pp.86-87)

Children are divided into groups of three or four. Each group is given a large piece of paper and materials with which to draw or to make a collage (markers, paint, magazines, glue, and scissors). The teacher gives the following instructions: *On the piece of paper, together, you are going to illustrate what the word 'conflict' means to you.* No other instructions should be given. At the end of the activity, each group chooses a spokesperson to present and explain their drawing. The other children may add their comments if they wish to. The teacher should encourage the group to reflect on the feelings expressed, the examples used and the different possible symbols, which appear. In this way, he/she can help the children to gain an awareness of their perceptions of conflict and their feelings with regard to these.

Follow up questions:

- What feelings did I experience when discussing how I view 'conflict'?
- How did I feel when I discovered how others viewed the notion of 'conflict'?
- Was it easy to participate in a group drawing? Why? Why not?

Feelings sculptures (Denis et al., 2000, p.124)

Each child is given some modelling clay. The teacher asks the children to think of a feeling they felt during either a pleasant experience or an unpleasant experience. The teacher then asks the children to sculpt the modelling clay in such a way as to represent this feeling, either symbolically or realistically. The children work on their sculptures in silence with the

exception of background music. Those children who wish to may explain the meaning behind their sculptures.

Follow up questions:

- Is it easy to represent a feeling?
- Was it easy to remember a pleasant or unpleasant situation? Why? Why not?
- Was it easier to remember a pleasant situation or an unpleasant one? Why?
- Did the use of modelling clay to represent the feeling help you to explore what you felt during the situation?

Hands and feet (Denis et al., 2000, p.74)

The children are divided into groups of five or six. The teacher calls out a certain number of feet and a certain number of hands which each group is allowed to have on the floor (for example, eight feet and six hands). As a group, the children must follow the teacher's instructions in order to have the correct number of hands and feet on the floor. After each try, the teacher reduces the number of feet and hands which they are allowed to place on the floor. This makes it necessary for the children to find diverse solutions in order to follow the instructions.

Follow up questions:

- Was it easy to follow the instructions? Why/Why not?
- Was it easy to get the others to listen to your suggestions?
- Was it easy to accept the solutions of other children in the group?

Hunt the pair (Mosley, 2005, p.147)

This activity is a warm-up which allows the teacher to mix children up before another activity in which the children are in pairs. The teacher prepares pictures in advance of items that belong together in pairs such as salt & pepper, dustpan & brush, knife and fork etc... Each child receives a card. The children then walk around the room trying to find the other half of their pair in silence.

Knock, knock (Denis et al., 2000, p.121)

The children stand in a circle with their shoulders touching. One child is chosen to be outside of the circle. This goal for this child on the outside is to enter into the circle by developing different strategies (forcing his/her way, tricking the others). If the child is successful in gaining entry into the circle, the child who let him/her in now takes his/her place outside of the circle. Each child explains how they felt during the activity.

Follow up questions:

- Which strategies did the children outside the circle use?
- What kinds of feelings were expressed?
- During the activity were the feelings expressed by the two children (the child who manages to get into the circle and the child who lets the outside child in the circle) the same? Why?

Leading the blind (Lawrence, 2006, pp.87-88; Denis et al., 2000, pp.66-67; Mosley, 2005, p.136)

The children are put into pairs. One child is blindfolded and the other will serve as his/her guide. The pairs move around the room avoiding the various obstacles found there. At first, the guide helps the blindfolded child move around by holding him/her around the waist. Then he/she guides the child by holding his/her hand. Lastly, he/she guides the child by holding his/her finger. The children then switch roles with the other child now playing the guide.

Follow up questions:

- Did you feel confident during the activity when you were blindfolded or were you afraid? Why/Why not?
- Was it easy for the guide to accompany the blindfolded child? Why/Why not?

Mirror talking (Plummer, 2007, p.109; Denis et al., 2000, p.102; Mosley, 2005, p.138)

Children are divided into pairs and stand facing each other. They then place their hands palm facing palm, not letting them touch, as if a mirror separated them. When the teacher starts the music, one child begins to move his/her hands slowly. The other child imitates the movements, trying to keep them perfectly synchronised as if he/she were the mirror image. Then the other child is responsible for directing the hand movements.

Follow up questions:

- How did you feel during this activity?
- Was it easy to follow your partner's rhythm? Why?
- How did you go about directing the hand movements?
- What similarities or differences can you see between this face to face activity and a conversation between two people?

Moving circles (Staquet, 2002, pp.161-163)

The children are first mixed and seated in a circle in random order. Each child in the circle counts off a number, 'one' or 'two' in the correct order. The teacher checks to see each child has the correct number by asking all of the 'ones' to raise their hand and verifies that every other child has their hand raised. She/he then asks the children designated as 'number ones' to move their chair so that the right front corner is touching the right front corner of the chair of the 'number two' next to them. When the children are seated facing each other diagonally, the teacher explains that the 'number twos' will be the first to begin to answer one of the questions. The teacher explains that the number ones must only listen during this time, but that they can ask questions if they don't understand something and that they will also have a chance to answer the question later in the activity. The teacher explains that the children will have only one minute to answer the question and that it is therefore important to choose which elements they wish to discuss. The teacher then gives the question for the 'number ones' to answer. Example questions are: What is your favourite TV programme? What is your greatest fear? What do you dream of doing someday? Etc... When the time is up the 'number twos' are given one minute to answer the same question. After two questions, the teacher asks the

'number twos' to thank their partner, stand up and move to their right. The process starts over again.

Follow up questions:

- How did you feel when you were answering the question?
- Was it easy to just listen and not intervene? Why?
- How did you feel when the other children were answering the questions?
- Were you surprised in any way by some of the children's answers? Why?

Musical balance (Denis et al., 2000, pp.75-76; Plummer, 2007, p.115 adaptation)

The children form a circle with their chairs turned towards the inside of the circle. There is one chair less than the number of children participating. When the music begins, the children walk around the outside of the chairs. When the music stops, the children sit on the chairs. Contrary to the original 'musical chairs' game where the child without a chair must leave the circle, in this activity the children must all find a way to be seated. This means that they will have to sit on each other's laps. When the music begins again, the teacher removes another chair. Each time the teacher removes a chair the number of children sitting on each other's laps increases. It is important for the teacher to pay careful attention to the safety and well being of all of the children throughout the activity. If the children seem to be acting too rough towards each other, the activity can be interrupted and better ways of conduct can be discussed.

Variation: This game can be played with hoops placed on the floor instead of chairs. Each time the music begins the teacher removes a hoop. The children then must all try to fit into the remaining hoops.

Follow up questions:

- Which version of this activity do you prefer: this co-operative version of musical chairs or the competitive version?
- Did everyone feel comfortable and at ease during this activity? Why?
- Did the group organise itself well enough to be able to reach the end of the activity?
- Is it easy to have someone sit on your lap?

Personal Flag/coat of arms (Clough & Holden, 2002, p.72; Denis et al., 2000, pp. 57-59; Staquet, 2002, pp.189-190)

The teacher discusses the function of a flag/coat of arms (the way it is designed, its history, its purpose). The teacher can present different examples of flags/coats of arms and ask children if they recognise them and what they represent. Each child receives a piece of paper (or eventually an outline of a coat of arms). The teacher can ask the children to divide their flag/coat of arms into four sections which will represent four different themes ('my hobby', 'a dream I have', 'my hero', 'my family', 'something that makes me happy', 'an important person for me', 'my best memory', 'my last vacation' etc...) or they may allow the children the freedom to design their own flag/coat of arms and to decide on the content themselves. The children then illustrate their flags/coat of arms. When the children have finished

illustrating their flags, each child writes a few lines to explain their flag. Each child presents their flag/coat of arms to the group.

Follow up questions:

- Why did you choose some themes and not others?
- Were you able to see some things you have in common with others and some ways you are unique?
- Was it easy for you to have others look at you while you were presenting your flag/coat of arms?
- Did the flag/coat of arms help you to communicate your thoughts and/or to express yourself?
- Is it easy to remember what the others have presented?
- What have you learned about what is important to others in the class?

Silent greetings (Plummer, 2007, p. 44)

The teacher explains that the children will walk around the room while the music is playing. When the music stops, they must greet the other children silently in a friendly way (for example, a 'high-five', winking, shaking hands, a little wave, smiling etc...). The teacher may demonstrate a few ideas first.

Follow up questions:

- Did you learn a new greeting or get a new idea and then try it out on someone else?
- Did some ways of greeting seem easier than others?
- What was the most relaxed/fun/natural way to greet others?
- Which one felt most like 'you'?
- Did you change your greeting to match other people or did pairs sometimes greet each other in completely different ways?
- How did that feel?

Statues (Denis et al., 2000, p.103)

The children are divided into pairs and stand facing each other. One of the children is blindfolded; the other decides on a position and then freezes like a statue. The blindfolded child explores the position of the 'statue' with his/her hands and then imitates the pose. The children verify if the blindfolded child was correct and then exchange roles.

Variation:

The children form a circle. Two children are selected to come to the middle of the circle. One child is chosen to be the statue, decides on a position to hold and then freezes like a statue; the other is blindfolded. The blindfolded child explores the position of the 'statue' with his/her hands and then imitates the pose. The children verify if the blindfolded child was correct and then exchange roles.

Follow up questions:

- Was it easy to understand and reproduce the other child's position?
- What difficulties did you experience?

- Was your imitation of the position correct? Why do you think you made a mistake? Did you verify the other child's position before trying to imitate it?
- Was it easy to touch the other person?
- What similarities and differences can you see between this activity and a conversation between two people?

Tangles (Denis et al., 2000, p.73; Mosley, 2005, p.138)

The children are separated into groups (maximum of eight children per group). Each group forms a tight circle. Each child closes their eyes, stretches their hands in front of them, crosses them and takes the hands of two other children in the circle (without seeing with whom they are connecting). When each child has grasped two hands, the children open their eyes and try to untangle themselves without letting go of the others' hands in order to form a circle.

Follow up questions:

- What role did each person play in untangling the situation?
- What helped the knot to unravel itself more or less quickly?

Touch something... (Staquet, 2002, pp.172-173)

The children walk around the room until the music stops. When the music stops, the teacher tells the children to 'touch something...' (for example, 'touch something blue'). The music resumes and the children continue walking around the room. When the music stops the teacher tells the children to 'touch something green'. The music resumes and the children continue to walk around the room. The third time the music stops, the teacher instructs the children to 'touch someone's ear'. The teacher now lets a student take his/her place to give a command. Six or seven commands total should be sufficient. The teacher needs to pay particular attention to the type of commands given by the children. A command which is disrespectful (such as, 'touch somebody's bottom') should be addressed firmly but without dramatising (For example, 'no, that idea is not great, let's see if X can give a command which is fun and respectful of everyone'). It is important to maintain a fast pace during this activity. This ensures that the activity is not too frightening for some children. Some children might stand away from the group in order to avoid touching the others or being touched. This is part of his/her 'right to pass'.

Follow up questions:

- How did you feel during this activity?
- Was it easy to touch _____ (For example, 'another child's earlobe')? Why?
- Were there any commands which were difficult for you?
- Were you able to carry out the activity in a non-violent way? Why?

The two donkeys (Denis et al., 2000, pp. 91-93)

The children are divided into groups of five or six. Each group receives a copy of the drawing of the poster 'If nations had the common sense of donkeys' (Denis et al., 2000, p.92; see end of resource pack) cut into six strips and mixed up. Each group must place the strips in the order they feel is accurate. Once the strips are in place, the children invent a story to accompany the illustrations. Each group presents their story to the class in an original way

(miming, acting it out etc...). The teacher then asks the children to discuss the ways in which the activity was conducted. If there were difficulties, he/she asks the children what they feel the causes were. The teacher asks the children what kind of attitudes they had during the activity (competition, compromise, co-operation, adapting to others).

Follow up questions:

- Are you happy with the attitude you had during the activity?
- How did this attitude help you/work against you during the activity?
- What other attitudes could you have had?

Warm fuzzies

The teacher reads the story the Original Warm Fuzzy Tale (Le conte chaud et doux des chaudoudoux) by Claude Steiner (1983). A few passages are found below in order to situate the activity in its context:

...In those happy days everyone was given a small, soft Fuzzy Bag when born. Any time a person reached into this bag they were able to pull out a Warm Fuzzy. Warm Fuzzies were very much in demand because whenever someone was given a Warm Fuzzy it made them feel warm and fuzzy all over...

...[Belzepha gave everyone], free of charge, a bag which was very similar to the Fuzzy Bag except that this one was cold while the Fuzzy bag was warm. Inside the witch's bag were Cold Pricklies. These Cold Pricklies did not feel warm and fuzzy; in fact they made them feel cold and prickly instead...

(English version taken from: <http://www.claudesteiner.com//fuzzy.htm>)

After the description of the warm fuzzies in the story, the teacher asks the children if they have already received any Warm Fuzzies (a present, a nice surprise, a hug, etc...). Later in the story, when the Cold Pricklies are described, the teacher asks if the children have already received any Cold Pricklies (a punishment, being scolded, being called names, being hit etc...). During the second part of the activity, the children are seated in a circle. Each child receives a 'Warm Fuzzy bag' on which is written their name. This 'bag' can be a small notebook, file or envelope which is either prepared by the children themselves or by the teacher prior to the activity. Each child passes their Warm Fuzzy bag to the child on their right. The children now write a positive message to the child whose Warm Fuzzy bag they have. The message can be a statement or a picture representing something that child appreciates or likes about the other one. Several sessions should be scheduled during which a maximum of five messages should be written. It is important that the teacher pays careful to ensure that all children have the same number of Warm Fuzzies.

Follow up questions:

- Is it always easy to find positive qualities in other people? Why? Why not?
- Did you find it difficult to identify what exactly you like about another person?
- Is everyone happy with the messages they received? Why? Why not?

What a ball (Denis et al., 2000, pp. 55-56)

The children are standing and form a circle. The teacher throws a beach ball (or soft toy/animal) and introduces him/herself by stating his/her forename and favourite dessert. The child who has caught the ball then introduces him/herself and states his/her favourite dessert (For example, 'Julian, I love chocolate mousse'), then throws the ball to another child in the circle. The ball must be passed to each of the children during the activity. When every child has had a turn, the teacher takes the ball. He/she explains that the ball will be passed around again but that this time the child with the ball must remember another child's name and favourite dessert. Each child who receives the ball must toss it to another child whose name and favourite dessert he remembers. Every child must receive the ball during the activity. The teacher is allowed to help children remember the names and favourite desserts of the other children.

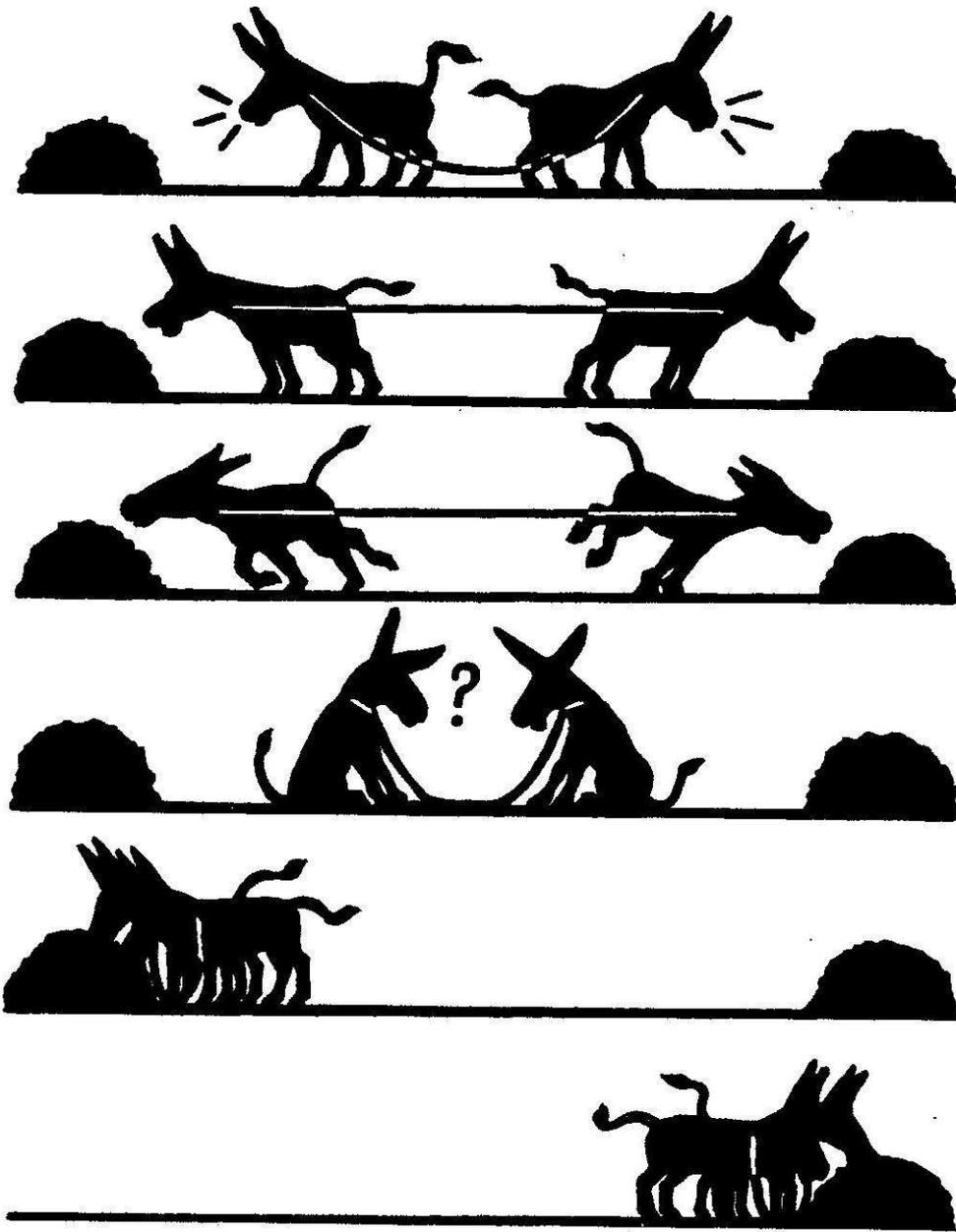
Variations:

- 1) When a good degree of trust has been built among the children in the class, the information given can be more personal (my favourite sport, something I am proud of, something I do well).
- 2) Without using the ball, the information can be replaced by a particular gesture which the others in the group must remember and reproduce.

Follow up questions:

- Was it easy to listen to and remember the names and information? Why/Why not?
- Did you find out any things you have in common with other children in the class?
- Did you discover anything you did not previously know about others in the class?
- Was it easier to think of negative aspects of yourself than positive aspects?
- Is it easy to talk about your qualities and strong points? Why/Why not?

Drawing used in the activity 'The two donkeys'.
(Denis et al., 2000, p.92)



'Si les nations avaient le bon sens des ânes !'

Illustrations from *Emergency Peace Campaign* for the 'No foreign war crusade' U.S.A. 1937.

Appendix 4 : Harter Self-Perception Profile for Children, French version
(Version française de Boivin, Vitaro et Gagnon, 1992)

Qui suis-je ?

1.

Tout à fait
comme
moi

Un peu
comme
moi

Certains enfants pensent qu'ils sont très bons en classe,

MAIS

Tout à fait
comme
moi

Un peu
comme
moi

**d'autres enfants se demandent s'ils sont capables de faire
leurs travaux en classe**

2.

Tout à fait
comme
moi

Un peu
comme
moi

Certains enfants trouvent difficile de se faire des ami(e)s,

MAIS

Tout à fait
comme
moi

Un peu
comme
moi

**d'autres enfants trouvent très facile de se faire des
ami(e)s.**

3.

Tout à fait
comme
moi

Un peu
comme
moi

Certains enfants réussissent très bien dans les sports

MAIS

Tout à fait
comme
moi

Un peu
comme
moi

d'autres enfants ne pensent pas être très bons dans les sports

4.

Tout à fait
comme
moi

Un peu
comme
moi

Certains enfants sont contents de leur apparence,

MAIS

Tout à fait
comme
moi

Un peu
comme
moi

D'autres enfants ne sont pas contents de leur apparence.

5.

Tout à fait
comme
moi

Un peu
comme
moi

Certains enfants, souvent n'aiment pas leur façon de se comporter,

MAIS

Tout à fait
comme
moi

Un peu
comme
moi

d'autres enfants aiment habituellement leur façon de se comporter.

6.

Tout à fait
comme
moi

Un peu
comme
moi

**Certains enfants sont la plupart du temps contents
d'eux-mêmes,**

MAIS

Tout à fait
comme
moi

Un peu
comme
moi

**d'autres enfants sont souvent mécontents d'eux-
mêmes.**

7.

Tout à fait
comme
moi

Un peu
comme
moi

**Certains enfants trouvent qu'ils sont aussi intelligents
que les autres enfants de leur âge,**

MAIS

Tout à fait
comme
moi

Un peu
comme
moi

**d'autres enfants n'en sont pas si sûr et se demandent
s'ils sont intelligent.**

8.

Tout à fait
comme
moi

Un peu
comme
moi

Certains enfants sont un peu difficiles à aimer,

MAIS

Tout à fait
comme
moi

Un peu
comme
moi

d'autres enfants sont vraiment facile à aimer.

9.

Tout à fait
comme
moi

Un peu
comme
moi

**Certains enfants aimeraient être bien meilleurs
dans les sports,**

MAIS

Tout à fait
comme
moi

Un peu
comme
moi

**d'autres enfants ont l'impression d'être assez bons
dans les sports.**

10.

Tout à fait
comme
moi

Un peu
comme
moi

**Certains enfants sont contents de leur taille (grandeur)
et de leur poids,**

MAIS

Tout à fait
comme
moi

Un peu
comme
moi

**d'autres enfants aimeraient que leur taille (grandeur)
et que leur poids soient différents.**

11.

Tout à fait
comme
moi

Un peu
comme
moi

Certains enfants ont habituellement des problèmes à cause des choses qu'ils font,

MAIS

Tout à fait
comme

Un peu
comme
moi

d'autres enfants ne font pas habituellement des choses moi qui leur causent des problèmes.

12.

Tout à fait
comme
moi

Un peu
comme
moi

**Certains enfants se mettent souvent en colère
Contre eux-mêmes,**

MAIS

Tout à fait
comme
moi

Un peu
comme
moi

d'autres enfants sont assez contents d'eux-mêmes.

13.

Tout à fait
comme
moi

Un peu
comme
moi

Certains enfants oublient souvent ce qu'ils apprennent,

MAIS

Tout à fait
comme
moi

Un peu
comme
moi

d'autres enfants se rappellent facilement les choses qu'ils ont apprises.

14.

Tout à fait
comme
moi

Un peu
comme
moi

**Certains enfants voudraient être aimés par plus
d'enfants,**

MAIS

Tout à fait
comme
moi

Un peu
comme
moi

**d'autres enfants pensent que la plupart des enfants
les aiment.**

15.

Tout à fait
comme
moi

Un peu
comme
moi

**Certains enfants pensent qu'ils sont meilleurs dans le
sport que les autres de leur âge,**

MAIS

Tout à fait
comme

Un peu
comme
moi

**d'autres enfants ne pensent pas qu'ils peuvent jouer moi
aussi bien que les autres dans le sport.**

16.

Tout à fait
comme
moi

Un peu
comme
moi

Certains enfants aimeraient que leur corps soit différent,

MAIS

Tout à fait
comme
moi

Un peu
comme
moi

d'autres enfants aiment leur corps comme il est.

17.

Tout à fait
comme
moi

Un peu
comme
moi

**Certains enfants font des choses qu'ils savent qu'ils ne
devraient pas faire,**

MAIS

Tout à fait
comme
moi

Un peu
comme
moi

**d'autres enfants font rarement des choses qu'ils ne
devraient pas faire.**

18.

Tout à fait
comme
moi

Un peu
comme
moi

**Certains enfants aiment le genre de personne qu'ils
sont,**

MAIS

Tout à fait
comme
moi

Un peu
comme
moi

d'autres enfants voudraient être différents.

19.

Tout à fait
comme
moi

Un peu
comme
moi

**Certains enfants réussissent très bien leur travaux
de classe,**

MAIS

Tout à fait
comme
moi

Un peu
comme
moi

**d'autres enfants ne font pas très bien leur travaux de
classe.**

20.

Tout à fait
comme
moi

Un peu
comme
moi

**Certains enfants sont populaires auprès des enfants de leur
âge,**

MAIS

Tout à fait
comme
moi

Un peu
comme
moi

d'autres enfants ne sont pas très populaires.

21.

Tout à fait
comme
moi

Un peu
comme
moi

**Certains enfants ne réussissent pas bien aux nouveaux jeux
extérieurs,**

MAIS

Tout à fait
comme
moi

Un peu
comme
moi

**d'autres enfants sont tout de suite bons aux nouveaux
jeux extérieurs.**

22.

Tout à fait
comme
moi

Un peu
comme
moi

Certains enfants aimeraient que quelque chose de leur figure ou de leurs cheveux soit différent,

MAIS

Tout à fait
comme
moi

Un peu
comme
moi

d'autres enfants aiment leur figure ou leurs cheveux comme ils sont.

23.

Tout à fait
comme
moi

Un peu
comme
moi

Certains enfants sont habituellement gentils envers les autres,

MAIS

Tout à fait
comme
moi

Un peu
comme
moi

d'autres enfants aimeraient être plus gentils envers les autres.

24.

Tout à fait
comme
moi

Un peu
comme
moi

Certains enfants sont très heureux d'être comme ils sont,

MAIS

Tout à fait
comme
moi

Un peu
comme
moi

d'autres enfants voudraient être différents.

Appendix 5 : The Q.A.E.V.S. (Questionnaire d'Auto-Evaluation de Soi)
Designed by Maintier, C. & Alaphilippe, D. (2006)

Questions 1 & 2 in their original format:

**Pour l'intelligence, tu trouves que tu es,
par rapport aux enfants de ton âge :**

Fais une croix dans la case au-dessus de ta réponse

Bien moins
Intelligent
que les autres

moins intelligent
que les autres

aussi intelligent
que les autres

plus intelligent
que les autres

beaucoup plus
intelligent
que les autres

Est-ce que l'intelligence est importante pour toi ?

Sans importance

peu importante

moyennement
importante

assez importante

très importante

Questions 3-14 (condensed format)

3.) Pour faire du dessin, de la musique ou du bricolage tu trouves que tu es, parmi les enfants de ton âge:

Bien moins bon que les autres, moins bon que les autres, aussi bon que les autres meilleur que les autres, bien meilleur que les autres.

4.) Est-ce que le dessin, la musique le bricolage sont important pour toi?

Sans importance, peu importants, moyennement importants, assez importants, très importants

5.) Quand tu fais du sport, tu trouves que tu es, parmi les enfants de ton âge:

Bien moins bon que les autres, plutôt moins bon que les autres, aussi bon que les autres plutôt meilleur que les autres, bien meilleur que les autres.

6.) Est-ce que le sport est important pour toi?

Sans importance, peu important, moyennement important, assez important, très important

7.) Parmi les enfants de ton âge, tu trouves que **tu aimes** lire:

Bien moins que les autres, plutôt moins que les autres, autant que les autres, plutôt plus que les autres, bien plus que les autres

8.) Est-ce que lire est important pour toi?

Sans importance, peu important, moyennement important, assez important, très important

9.) Pour **dire des choses**, tu trouves que tu es, parmi les enfants de ton âge:

Bien moins à l'aise que les autres, plutôt moins à l'aise que les autres, aussi à l'aise que les autres, plutôt plus à l'aise que les autres, bien plus à l'aise que les autres

10.) Est-ce que "dire des choses" est important pour toi?

Sans importance, peu important, moyennement important, assez important, très important

11.) Pour ton travail à l'école, tu trouves que tu es, parmi les enfants de ton âge:

Bien moins bon que les autres, plutôt moins bon que les autres, aussi bon que les autres plutôt meilleur que les autres, bien meilleur que les autres.

12.) Est-ce que le travail à l'école est important pour toi?

Sans importance, peu important, moyennement important, assez important, très important

13.) Quand tu penses à **ta beauté**, parmi les enfants de ton âge, tu trouves que tu es:

Bien moins beau que les autres, moins beau que les autres, aussi beau que les autres, plus beau que les autres, bien plus beau que les autres

14.) Est-ce que la beauté est importante pour toi?

Sans importance, peu importante, moyennement importante, assez importante très importante

Appendix 6 : Burnett Self Scale (final version, French)

Questionnaire

Nom, prénom :

J'ai ans Je suis un/une (garçon ou fille)

Je suis en (CE2/CM1/CM2)

J'ai frère(s). J'ai sœur(s).

Consigne:

- Pour chaque numéro du questionnaire il y a cinq phrases qui expriment ce que des enfants pensent ou ressentent par rapport à eux-mêmes.
- Lis attentivement chacune des cinq phrases, puis, décide quelle phrase **te** décrit **le mieux**.
- Ensuite, coche la boîte à côté de cette phrase.

Il n'y a pas de réponse juste ou fausse. Tu es le seul à savoir ce que tu penses ou ce que tu ressens, donc, tu peux répondre ce que tu penses ou ce que tu ressens vraiment. **Le questionnaire est personnel et confidentiel.** Cela veut dire que **personne d'autre** ne saura ce que tu réponds.

Par exemple :

- J'aime beaucoup la glace.
- J'aime la glace.
- J'aime parfois la glace.
- Je n'aime pas la glace.
- Je n'aime pas du tout la glace.

Cette personne aime la glace mais ne l'adore pas. Si la personne aimait beaucoup la glace, elle aurait mis une croix dans la première case. Si la personne n'aimait vraiment pas la glace elle aurait mis une croix à côté de la dernière phrase.

1. J'aime beaucoup mon apparence.
 J'aime mon apparence.
 J'aime parfois mon apparence.
 Je n'aime pas mon apparence.
 Je n'aime pas du tout mon apparence.

2. J'aime beaucoup le sport.
 J'aime le sport.
 J'aime moyennement le sport.
 Je n'aime pas beaucoup le sport.
 Je n'aime pas du tout le sport.

3. J'aime beaucoup lire.
 J'aime lire.
 J'aime parfois lire.
 Je n'aime pas lire.
 Je n'aime pas du tout lire.

4. J'aime beaucoup les maths.
 J'aime les maths.
 J'aime parfois les maths.
 Je n'aime pas les maths.
 Je n'aime pas du tout les maths.

5. J'aime beaucoup apprendre de nouvelles choses.
 J'aime apprendre de nouvelles choses.
 J'aime parfois apprendre de nouvelles choses.
 Je n'aime pas apprendre de nouvelles choses.
 Je n'aime pas du tout apprendre de nouvelles choses.

6. Je me sens très bien dans ma peau.
 Je me sens bien dans ma peau.
 Je me sens parfois bien dans ma peau.
 Je ne me sens pas bien dans ma peau.
 Je ne me sens pas bien du tout dans ma peau.
7. Quand je regarde dans la glace, je me trouve très beau/belle.
 Quand je regarde dans la glace, je me trouve beau/belle.
 Quand je regarde dans la glace, je me trouve assez beau, ça va.
 Quand je regarde dans la glace, je ne me trouve pas beau.
 Quand je regarde dans la glace, je ne me trouve pas beau du tout.
8. Je suis très bon en sport.
 Je suis bon en sport.
 Je suis moyen en sport.
 Je ne suis pas bon en sport.
 Je ne suis pas du tout bon en sport.
9. J'arrive à me faire des amis très facilement.
 J'arrive à me faire des amis facilement.
 J'arrive parfois à me faire des amis.
 Je n'arrive pas souvent à me faire des amis.
 Je n'arrive pas du tout à me faire des amis.
10. Je suis souvent content(e) de moi-même.
 Je suis content(e) de moi-même.
 Je suis parfois content(e) de moi-même.
 Je suis rarement content(e) de moi-même.
 Je ne suis jamais content(e) de moi-même.

11. Je suis très bon en lecture.
 Je suis bon en lecture.
 Je suis moyen en lecture.
 Je ne suis pas très bon en lecture.
 Je ne suis pas du tout bon en lecture.
12. Je suis très bon en maths.
 Je suis bon en maths.
 Je suis moyen en maths.
 Je ne suis pas très bon en maths.
 Je ne suis pas du tout bon en maths.
13. Je me sens très mal à l'aise quand je dois dire des choses devant le maître/la maîtresse.
 Je me sens mal à l'aise quand je dois dire des choses devant le maître/la maîtresse.
 Je me sens parfois mal à l'aise quand je dois dire des choses devant le maître/la maîtresse.
 Je ne me sens pas mal à l'aise quand je dois dire des choses devant le maître/la maîtresse.
 Je ne me sens jamais mal à l'aise quand je dois dire des choses devant le maître/la maîtresse.
14. J'aime beaucoup me regarder dans la glace.
 J'aime me regarder dans la glace.
 J'aime parfois me regarder dans la glace.
 Je n'aime pas me regarder dans la glace.
 Je n'aime pas du tout me regarder dans la glace.

15. J'aime beaucoup jouer avec d'autres enfants.
 J'aime jouer avec d'autres enfants.
 J'aime parfois jouer avec d'autres enfants.
 Je n'aime pas jouer avec d'autres enfants.
 Je n'aime pas du tout jouer avec d'autres enfants.
16. Je me sens souvent fier/fière de moi.
 Je me sens assez fier/fière de moi.
 Je me sens parfois fier/fière de moi.
 Je me sens rarement fier/fière de moi.
 Je ne me sens jamais fier/fière de moi.
17. Je m'aime beaucoup comme je suis.
 Je m'aime assez comme je suis.
 Je m'aime parfois comme je suis.
 Je ne m'aime pas comme je suis.
 Je ne m'aime pas du tout comme je suis.
18. Je suis très bon à la course.
 Je suis bon à la course.
 Je suis moyen à la course.
 Je ne suis pas bon à la course.
 Je ne suis pas du tout bon à la course.
19. J'ai vraiment beaucoup d'amis.
 J'ai beaucoup d'amis.
 J'ai quelques amis
 Je n'ai pas beaucoup d'amis.
 Je n'ai pas d'amis.

20. J'ai beaucoup de confiance en moi.
 J'ai confiance en moi.
 J'ai parfois confiance en moi.
 Je n'ai pas beaucoup confiance en moi.
 Je n'ai pas du tout confiance en moi.
21. J'ai de très bonnes notes en lecture.
 J'ai de bonnes notes en lecture.
 J'ai des notes moyennes en lecture.
 Je n'ai pas de bonnes notes en lecture.
 Je n'ai pas du tout de bonnes notes en lecture.
22. J'ai de très bonnes notes en maths.
 J'ai de bonnes notes en maths.
 J'ai des notes moyennes en maths.
 Je n'ai pas de bonnes notes en maths.
 Je n'ai pas du tout de bonnes notes en maths.
23. Apprendre de nouvelles choses est vraiment facile pour moi.
 Apprendre de nouvelles choses est facile pour moi.
 Apprendre de nouvelles choses est parfois facile pour moi.
 Apprendre de nouvelles choses est difficile pour moi.
 Apprendre de nouvelles choses est très difficile pour moi.
24. Mon père aime toujours entendre mes idées.
 Mon père aime souvent entendre mes idées.
 Mon père aime parfois entendre mes idées.
 Mon père n'aime pas souvent entendre mes idées.
 Mon père n'aime jamais entendre mes idées.

25. Ma mère aime toujours entendre mes idées.

Ma mère aime souvent entendre mes idées.

Ma mère aime parfois entendre mes idées.

Ma mère n'aime pas souvent entendre mes idées.

Ma mère n'aime jamais entendre mes idées.

26. J'aimerais changer beaucoup de choses chez moi-même.

J'aimerais changer des choses chez moi-même.

J'aimerais changer un peu de chose chez moi-même.

Je n'aimerais pas changer beaucoup de choses chez moi-même.

Je n'aimerais rien changer chez moi-même.

Appendix 7: Burnett Self Scale (final version, English)

1. I really like the way I look.
 I like the way I look.
 I sometimes like the way I look.
 I do not like the way I look.
 I really do not like the way I look.

2. I really like sports and games.
 I like sports and games.
 I sometimes like sports and games.
 I do not like sports and games.
 I really do not like sports and games.

3. I really like reading.
 I like reading.
 I sometimes like reading.
 I do not like reading.
 I really do not like reading.

4. I really like maths and sums.
 I like maths and sums.
 I sometimes like maths and sums.
 I do not like maths and sums.
 I really do not like maths and sums.

5. I really like learning new things.
 I like learning new things.
 I sometimes like learning new things.
 I do not like learning new things.
 I really do not like learning new things.

6. I feel really good about myself.
 I feel good about myself.
 I sometimes feel good about myself.
 I do not feel good about myself.
 I really do not feel good about myself.
7. I am really good looking.
 I am good looking.
 I am OK looking.
 I am not good looking.
 I really am not good looking.
8. I am really good at sports and games.
 I am good at sports and games.
 I am OK at sports and games.
 I am not good at sports and games.
 I really am not good at sports and games.
9. I am really good at making friends.
 I am good at making friends.
 I am OK at making friends.
 I am not good at making friends
 I am really not good at making friends
10. I often feel pleased with myself.
 I feel pleased with myself.
 I sometimes feel pleased with myself.
 I do not often feel pleased with myself.
 I rarely feel pleased myself.

11. I am really good at reading.
 I am good at reading.
 I am OK at reading.
 I am not good at reading.
 I am really not good at reading.
12. I am really good at maths.
 I am good at maths.
 I am OK at maths.
 I am not good at maths.
 I am really not good at maths.
13. I am really good at learning new things.
 I am good at learning new things.
 I am OK at learning new things.
 I am not good at learning new things.
 I am really not good at learning new things.
14. I really like looking at myself in the mirror.
 I like looking at myself in the mirror.
 I sometimes like looking at myself in the mirror.
 I do not like looking at myself in the mirror.
 I really do not like looking at myself in the mirror.
15. I really like playing with other kids.
 I like playing with other kids.
 I sometimes like playing with other kids.
 I do not like playing with other kids.
 I really do not like playing with other kids.

16. I feel really proud of myself.
 I feel proud of myself.
 I sometimes feel proud of myself.
 I do not feel proud of myself.
 I really do not feel proud of myself.
17. I really like being the way I am.
 I like being the way I am.
 I sometimes like being the way I am.
 I do not like being the way I am.
 I really do not like being the way I am.
18. I am really good at running.
 I am good at running.
 I am OK at running.
 I am not good at running.
 I am really not good at running.
19. I really have a lot of friends.
 I have lots of friends.
 I have a few friends..
 I do not have many friends.
 I do not have any friends.
20. I feel really confident in myself.
 I feel confident in myself.
 I sometimes feel confident in myself.
 I do not feel confident in myself.
 I really do not feel confident in myself.

21. I get really good marks in reading.
 I get good marks in reading.
 I get OK marks in reading.
 I do not get good marks in reading.
 I really do not get good marks in reading.
22. I get really good marks in maths.
 I get good marks in maths.
 I get OK marks in maths.
 I do not get good marks in maths.
 I really do not get good marks in maths
23. I find learning new things really easy.
 I find learning new things easy.
 I sometimes find learning new things easy.
 I find learning new things hard.
 I find learning new things really hard.
24. My father always likes to hear about my ideas.
 My father usually likes to hear about my ideas.
 My father sometimes likes to hear about my ideas.
 My father does not often like to hear about my ideas.
 My father never likes to hear about my ideas.
25. My mother always likes to hear about my ideas.
 My mother usually likes to hear about my ideas.
 My mother sometimes likes to hear about my ideas.
 My mother does not often like to hear about my ideas.
 My mother never likes to hear about my ideas.

26. There are really a lot of things about myself I would like to change.
- There are a lot of things about myself I would like to change.
- There are some things about myself that I would like to change.
- There are not many things about myself that I would like to change.
- There is nothing about myself I would like to change.

Appendix 8: Initial teacher interview schedule: French version

Entretien initial enseignant

1. Quelle est ta définition de l'estime de soi ? Qu'est-ce qui contribue à avoir une bonne estime de soi ? Comment l'estime de soi se développe chez l'enfant ?
2. Est-ce que tu penses qu'un enseignant a un rôle à jouer dans le développement de l'estime de soi d'un enfant ? Pourrais-tu expliquer ta réponse ?
3. Est-ce que dans le passé tu as remarqué certaines pratiques qui ont eu une influence sur l'estime de soi des élèves ?
4. Est-ce que à l'IUFM tu as eu des formations par rapport à l'estime de soi ?
5. Cette année est-ce qu'il y a des pratiques que tu comptes mettre en place qui, à ton avis, auront une influence positive sur l'estime de soi des enfants ?
6. Est-ce que tu penses qu'il y a un lien entre le fait de responsabiliser des élèves et leur estime d'eux-mêmes ?
7. Comment un enseignant peut-t-il encourager la responsabilité chez ses élèves : à un niveau personnel et par rapport à son travail personnel ?
8. Au niveau de l'apprentissage, à ton avis, quels sont les outils qui pourraient aider les enfants à se prendre en charge pour leur apprentissage ? Est-ce qu'il ya des outils à mettre en place ou que tu as mis en place qui aident les enfants à être responsable pour leur propre apprentissage ?
9. Je vais te demander où tu situes chaque enfant par rapport à :
 - a. leur estime de soi
 - b. leur comportement et leur travail en classe
 - c. leurs résultats scolaires
 - d. leurs relations avec leurs pairs

Appendix 9: Initial teacher interview schedule: English version

1. How would you define self-esteem? How do you think self-esteem develops in children?
2. How can a teacher build a child's self-esteem in the classroom? Do they have a role in its development? Can you explain your answer?
3. Have you noticed any particular practices which have seemed to you to have had an influence on your students' self-esteem? Can you describe them?
4. Have you ever had any training in this area (at the IUFM or during in-service training)?
5. Are there any practices you are planning on implementing this year which you feel will positively influence children's self-esteem?
6. Do you think there is a link between helping children to be responsible and their self-esteem?
7. How can teachers encourage responsibility in their pupils on a personal level and on a more widespread level?
8. Which learning tools are effective in helping them take responsibility for their own responsibility?
9. Could you tell me a little bit about your perception of these students (possible focus children)? Could you describe their:
 - Self-esteem?
 - Their behaviour and way of working in class?
 - Their school results?
 - Their peer relations ?

Appendix 10: Mid-year semi-structured teacher interview schedule French version

Entretien Enseignant 2^e trimestre

1. Cela fait six mois depuis de début de l'année scolaire et j'aimerais parler des différentes activités et pratiques pédagogiques que tu as mises en œuvre cette année.
 - Est-ce que tu pourrais me dire quelles activités et quelles pratiques ont bien marché ?
 - Pourquoi à ton avis cela a-t-il bien marché ?
 - Quels sont tes critères pour déterminer si une leçon a bien marché ou pas ?
2. Est-ce qu'il y a des activités ou des pratiques qui n'ont pas très bien marché ? Pourquoi, à ton avis ils n'ont pas bien marché ?
3. Il y a des pratiques que tu as mises en place dans la classe cette année que j'aimerais que tu m'explique un peu (si ce n'est pas déjà fait). Est-ce que tu pourrais m'expliquer pourquoi tu as choisi d'inclure ces pratiques/activités cette année et me dire si tu penses que ces pratiques/activités ont eu une influence sur des élèves. Si oui, pourquoi penses-tu cela ? Si non, pourquoi penses-tu cela ?

Exemples :

- Les ceintures
- Les 'métiers'
- Les 'contrats'
- Le spectacle de Noël/la classe verte
- Le tutorat :

4. Thèmes lors du premier entretien :

Exemples :

- Est-ce que tu peux identifier des exemples ou tu as pu 'reconnaître l'enfant' ou des exemples ou tu leur as 'donné envie d'apprendre' ?
- 'Le retour du groupe'
- 'Les lieux de parole' :
- 'Les projets/les chefs de projets' :

5. Au début de l'année scolaire nous avons parlé de ta perception de chaque élève dans 'l'échantillon'. J'aimerais que l'on revienne sur chaque élève individuellement.
- 'Nom de l'élève' :
 - Est-ce que tu peux me décrire sa situation dans la classe actuellement ?
 - Est-ce qu'il a progressé ? Qu'est-ce qui a contribué à cela ?
 - Comment envisages-tu ton travail avec lui/elle jusqu'à la fin de l'année ?
6. Quels sont tes projets pour le reste de l'année scolaire ? Est-ce que tu compte changer des choses ? Pourquoi as-tu décidé de faire ces changements ? Comment tu compte faire cela ?

Appendix 11: Mid-year semi-structured teacher interview schedule English version

1. It has been six months since the beginning of the project. I'd like to discuss the different activities and teaching practices you've been implementing in the classroom so far this year. Could you describe the activities which have worked well?

Activities which have worked well: (why do you think this was? What are the criteria for a lesson working well?)

2. Are there any activities which have not worked so well? Why do you think they didn't work well?
3. There are some practices you have implemented that I would like to know more about. Could you explain them a bit and say why you implemented them and any influence you think they have had on the children this year?

Examples:

- The personalised desk mats
 - The trip around the world
 - Joint student/teacher assessment
 - 'Personalised feedback'
4. In the beginning of the school year we discussed your perception of the six focus children. Could we talk about each child in turn:

- Focus Child (1-6 individually):
 - Could you describe the situation in the classroom at the present time?
 - How, in your opinion has he/she progressed?
 - What has contributed to this?

5. What are your plans for the remainder of the school year? Is there anything you plan on changing? (Why have you decided to change this? How are you planning on doing this?)

6. Key themes from 1st interview (if these are not discussed in the previous part of the interview):

In our last interview a few key themes arose with regards to how a teacher might have a positive influence on a child's self-esteem. You mentioned the following practices

Examples:

- 'valuing the child'
- 'Paying attention to the little everyday things' in class
- Using current events to 'guide children towards an attitude of tolerance and respect'
- Helping students to become responsible.

Could you say a little bit more about these areas as you have experienced them from the beginning of the year up to the present?

Appendix 12: End of Year Teacher Semi-structured Interview Schedule French version

Entretien de fin d'année : enseignants v2

1. Nous voilà à la fin de l'année scolaire. J'aimerais parler des différentes pratiques et activités que tu as mises en place cette année entre autre dans le cadre de ce projet sur l'estime de soi, par exemple, les jeux coopératifs, le conseil de classe, le goûter philo etc... J'aimerais que l'on regarde en détail chaque activité séparément pour en parler en détail.
 - a. Pourrais-tu me parler un peu de :
 - b. Qu'est-ce qui a bien marché dans cette activité
 - c. Pourquoi à ton avis cela a bien marché ?
 - d. Qu'est-ce qui a marché moins bien dans cette activité ?
 - e. Pourquoi à ton avis ?
 - f. En quoi cette activité a-t-il été profitable aux élèves ? Quelles étaient les bénéfices de cette activité ? Qu'est-ce que cette activité a apporté aux élèves ?
 - g. Si tu devais refaire cette activité, y a-t-il des choses que tu changerais ?
2. Quelles pratiques/quelles activités, si il y en a, est-ce que tu continuerais sans aucun doute, à l'avenir ? Pourquoi ?
3. Les élèves 'échantillon' : Au début de l'année, nous avons parlé de chaque élève individuellement par rapport à son estime de soi, ses capacités, ses points forts etcetera. Pourrais-tu décrire chaque élève à présent et donner un résumé des aspects suivants :
 - a. Son estime de soi :
 - i. Y a-t-il eu un changement pendant l'année ?
 - ii. A ton avis qu'est-ce qui a contribué à ce changement, quelle en était la cause ?
 - b. Son progrès sur un plan scolaire
 - i. Est-ce qu'il/elle a progressé dans tous les domaines ou seulement dans certains domaines précis?
 - ii. Qu'est-ce qui a facilité ce progrès (s'il y a eu du progrès) ?
 - c. Son progrès sur un plan relationnel/social
 - i. Est-ce qu'il/elle a progressé dans tous les domaines ou seulement dans certains domaines précis?
 - ii. Qu'est-ce qui a facilité ce progrès (s'il y a eu du progrès) ?
 - d. Dans quelle mesure estimes-tu que les activités mises en place cette année (dont nous avons parlé) ont aidé cet enfant cette année ?
4. Dans quelle mesure estimes-tu que les activités mises en place cette année (dont nous avons parlé) ont aidé les élèves dans la classe en générale cette année ?
5. Au début de l'année nous avons parlé de ta propre définition de l'estime de soi.
 - a. Comment définirais-tu 'l'estime de soi' maintenant
 - b. (si changement) Qu'est-ce qui a amené ce changement ?

- c. Comment ta compréhension du développement l'estime de soi des enfants a-t-il évolué au cours de cette année ?
6. Au début de l'année nous avons également parlé du rôle que joue la responsabilité dans le développement de l'estime de soi.
 - a. Pourrais-tu résumer les différentes façons que tu as encouragé l'apprentissage de la responsabilité, ou la responsabilisation des élèves dans ta classe cette année ?
 - b. Est-ce que tu penses que ces activités ont aidé les enfants à devenir plus responsables ? Pourquoi ? Pourquoi pas ?
 - c. Y a-t-il des activités qui ont été particulièrement réussies ?
 - d. Penses-tu que le fait de donner ces responsabilités, ou de responsabiliser des élèves dans la classe influence leur estime de soi ?
 - e. Pourquoi ? Pourquoi pas ?
7. Quelles étaient les plus gros défis que tu as rencontrés cette année dans la classe en générale ?
8. Quelles étaient les plus gros défis que tu as rencontrés cette année par rapport au projet et à la mise en place de ces activités?

Appendix 13: End of Year Teacher Semi-structured Interview Schedule English version

It is the end of the school year and I'd like to discuss the different activities and teaching practices you have been implementing in the classroom throughout this past school year, such as the cooperative games, the class council, philosophy for children etc..

1. Looking back over the year, could you comment on each of the activities individually?

- Can you tell me about activity?
- What worked well about this activity?
- Why do you think that was?
- What worked less well?
- Why do you think that was?
- What do you think the children gained (if not already covered under (b)).
- If you were to do this activity again, is there anything you would change, why?
- Which activities/practices, if any, would you definitely continue in the future? Why?

2. Focus children: In the beginning of the year we discussed each focus child individually with regards to his/her self-esteem, abilities, strong points etc.

- Could you describe each focus child now, and give a summary of his/her

i. Self-esteem

1. Has there been a change over the year?
2. What do you think has been the cause of this change?
(Of course, it could have gone down too.)

ii. Progress

1. Has this child made progress over the year? If yes, in all areas?
Or in just some areas?
2. What has helped to facilitate this progress?
(Of course, it could have gone down too.)

iii. To What extent do you feel the activities this year have helped this child?

3. Do you feel the activities this year have helped the children in the class in general?

4. We discussed your own definition of self-esteem at the beginning of the school year.

a.) How would you define self-esteem now?

(if they've changed their definition)

b.) What has brought about the change?

c.) How, if at all, has your understanding of the development of self-esteem in children changed over the course of the year?

5. We also discussed the role that responsibility plays in fostering self-esteem.

- a. Can you just summarise the ways in which you have encouraged responsibility in your class this year?

- b. Do you think these activities have helped the children to become more responsible?
 - c. If yes, are there any activities which are particularly successful in this respect?
 - d. Do you think that giving children opportunities to take on responsibilities within the classroom has an impact on their self-esteem?
 - e. Why/why not?
6. What were the greatest challenges you encountered this year in general?
7. What were the greatest challenges you encountered this year with regards to the implementation of the PSCE activities?

Appendix 14 : Mid-year focus group interviews French version

Entretien élèves en petit groupe deuxième trimestre

1. Je voudrais vous demander votre avis sur des activités faites en classe cette année. Depuis le début de l'année, votre maîtresse fait un certain nombre d'activités interactives en groupe. Par exemple :, (liste des activités par rapport à chaque classe) J'ai cité quelques unes que j'ai vues en classe. Est-ce que vous vous rappelez d'autres activités ? Est-ce que vous pouvez en citer d'autres ?
2. Est-ce qu'il y avait des activités que vous aimiez plus que d'autres ? Quelles activités avez-vous aimé le plus ?
3. Pourquoi avez-vous aimé ces activités ?
4. Est-ce qu'il y avait des activités que vous avez aimées moins que d'autres ? Lesquelles ? Est-ce qu'il y avait des activités que vous n'avez pas aimées du tout ? Lesquelles ?
5. Pourquoi vous n'avez pas aimé ces activités ?
6. Est-ce que certaines activités ont contribué à vous aider à vous sentir 'bien dans votre peau'? Autrement dit est-ce que certaines vous ont aidé à vous sentir bien? Par exemple, peut-être vous avez appris des choses à propos de vous-mêmes -où par votre propre expérience ou parce que quelqu'un vous avez dit quelque chose ou vous avez appris quelque chose- qui vous ont fait du bien ou vous ont rendu heureux ?
7. Est-ce que ces activités ont influencé ou ont changé comment vous voyez les autres ? Est-ce que vous pouvez expliquer pourquoi ?
8. Est-ce que le fait d'avoir pratiqué ou participé à ces activités a changé vos comportements envers les autres ou envers certaines personnes?
9. Est-ce que vous pouvez expliquer pourquoi ?
10. Est-ce que vous pensez que ces activités aident les enfants à mieux s'entendre, à être mieux ensemble ou est-ce que vous pensez plutôt qu'elles ne changent pas grande chose à ce niveau là ?
11. Pourquoi ? Est-ce que vous pouvez me donner des exemples ?
12. Est-ce qu'il y a des activités que vous aimeriez refaire ? Lesquelles ? Pourquoi ?

Appendix 15 : Mid-year focus group interviews English version

Mid year focus group interview schedule

1. Your teacher has been doing some inter-active group activities this year such as: (list activities by class). These are some of the activities that I have seen, do you remember any others?
2. Were there any of the activities you enjoyed more than others? Which did you like most?
3. Why did you enjoy them?
4. Were there any of the activities which you disliked more than others? Were there any you didn't like?
5. Why did you dislike them?
6. Did you feel happy when you had done these activities? Did they help you to feel good about yourself? Do you think doing these activities has had any influence on how you feel about yourself?
7. Do you think doing these activities has had any influence on how you think about other people? (Can you explain why?)
8. Do you think doing these activities has had any influence on how you behave towards others? (Can you explain why?)
9. Do you think doing these activities help children get along better or do you think they don't make any difference?
10. Why? Can you give any examples?
11. Are there any of these activities you'd like to do again? Why?

Appendix 16 : End of year focus child interview schedule French version

1. Cette année vous avez participé à beaucoup d'activités différentes (donner des exemples) Ce sont quelques exemples, est-ce que tu penses à d'autres ?
2. Est-ce qu'il y avait des activités que tu as aimées plus que d'autres ? Pourquoi ?
3. Est-ce qu'il y avait des activités que tu as moins aimées ? Lesquelles ? Pourquoi ?
4. Est-ce qu'il y avait des activités que tu as trouvées difficile ? Lesquelles ? Pourquoi ?
5. Est-ce que le fait d'avoir pratiqué ou participé à ces activités a changé ton comportement envers les autres ou envers certaines personnes?
6. Est-ce que vous pouvez expliquer pourquoi ?
7. Est-ce que vous pensez que ces activités aident les enfants à mieux s'entendre, à être mieux ensemble ou est-ce que vous pensez plutôt qu'elles ne changent pas grande chose à ce niveau là ?
8. Pourquoi ? Est-ce que tu peux me donner des exemples ?
9. Ta maîtresse vous demande de faire des 'métiers' ou des responsabilités dans la classe. Est-ce que tu peux m'expliquer ce que sont ces métiers ?
10. A ton avis, ça sert à quoi ?
11. Quelle responsabilité as-tu aimé le plus ? Pourquoi ? Qu'est-ce que tu as appris à travers ce métier/cette responsabilité ?
12. Est-ce qu'il y avait des responsabilités que tu n'as pas aimées ? Pourquoi ?
13. Est-ce qu'il y a des métiers que tu ajouterais à la liste ? Lesquels ? Pourquoi ?
14. Est-ce que tu peux décrire le conseil de classe ?
15. Est-ce que tu trouves que le conseil est une bonne chose ? Si oui, pourquoi ? Est-ce qu'il y a des parties du conseil qui sont difficiles ou qui ne sont pas nécessaires ?
16. As-tu fait des progrès en maths ou en français cette année ? Qu'est-ce qui a contribué à ça ? Et les autres matières ?
17. Quelle est la meilleure chose pour toi dans cette classe cette année. Qu'est ce que tu as aimé le plus dans la classe ?
18. Questions Individuelles sur les changements indiqués sur les deux questionnaires.

Appendix 17 : End of year focus child interview schedule English version

1. Your teacher has been doing some interactive group activities this year such as: (*mention specific activities from each class*). These are some of the activities that I have seen, do you remember any others?
2. Were there activities you liked more than others? Which ones? Why did you prefer these ones?
3. Were there any activities you disliked? Which ones? Why?
4. Were there any activities you found difficult. Why were they difficult?
5. Do you think doing these activities has had any influence on how you behave towards others? Can you explain why?
6. Do you think doing these activities help children get along better or do you think they don't make any difference?
7. Why? Can you give any examples?
8. Your teacher has asked you do 'jobs' or to hold certain responsibilities. Can you explain these to me?
9. What is purpose of these 'responsibilities'?
10. Which 'responsibility did you enjoy the most? Why? What did you learn from doing this?
11. Were there any responsibilities that you didn't like doing? Why?
12. Are there any jobs or responsibilities you think could be added to the list?
13. Can you describe the class council?
14. Do you think the class council is a good thing? Why/why not? Are there any parts of it which you think are difficult or unnecessary?
15. Do you feel you have made progress in maths/French this year? Does this need to be more specific –eg has your maths and writing got better this year? What about other subjects? What do you think contributed to that?
16. What has been the best thing about being in this class this year? What have you enjoyed about being in this class?

Appendix 18: Parent Interview schedule French

Entretien parents

Introduction :

J'aimerais commencer par vous donner une définition de l'estime de soi. L'estime de soi est d'une part l'image mentale qu'une personne a d'elle-même et d'autre part son évaluation de cette image et comment elle se sent par rapport à cette image. Quelqu'un qui a une bonne estime de lui-même a généralement confiance en lui, reconnaît ses qualités et se voit d'un œil positif et réaliste. L'estime de soi est le sentiment que l'on a de la valeur propre, qu'on est digne d'amour et que l'on est compétent. On pourrait dire qu'avoir une bonne estime de soi c'est se sentir bien dans sa peau. Auriez-vous des choses à dire par rapport à cette définition ; rajouter des éléments ou dire s'il y a des choses avec lesquelles vous n'êtes pas d'accord ?

1. A votre avis, quelles sortes de choses dans la vie des enfants pourraient les aider à s'apprécier et à se sentir bien dans leur peau et à avoir confiance en eux-mêmes?
2. Est-ce que vous pensez que les enseignants ont un rôle à jouer à ce niveau ? Est-ce que aider les enfants à avoir confiance en eux et à se sentir bien dans leur peau fait partie de leur tâches en tant qu'enseignants? Si non, pourquoi ? Si oui, pourquoi ? Comment pourraient-ils faire cela ?
3. Est-ce que vous avez remarqué si l'enseignant de votre enfant fait quelque chose en classe qui lui donne un sentiment de confiance en lui/en elle ? Si oui, pourquoi pensez-vous que cela l'aidé ?
4. Est-ce que vous pourriez me décrire certains aspects de votre enfant :
 - a.) Comment décririez-vous son estime de lui-même, sa confiance en lui ?
 - b.) Comment est son comportement à la maison et à l'école ?
 - c.) Quels sont ses talents, ses points forts, ses activités extra scolaire, qu'est-ce qu'il aime faire dans son temps libre ?
 - d.) Comment est -il/elle avec d'autres enfants ? Est-ce qu'il/elle se fait des amis facilement ? Est-ce qu'il/elle a un ami particulier ou beaucoup d'amis ? Est-ce qu'il/elle montre facilement ses émotions ?
 - e.) Quelle est son attitude envers l'école ? Aime-t-il/elle apprendre de nouvelles choses?
 - f.) Est-il en générale un enfant 'responsable'- est-ce qu'il se prend en main pour faire ce qu'il doit faire à la maison ? Est-il responsable par rapport son travail à l'école? A-t-il des responsabilités vis à vis d'autres membres de la famille ou des animaux domestiques?
5. Quelles sortes de choses faites-vous, éventuellement, avec votre enfant pour l'aider à devenir une personne responsable?

6. A votre avis, est-ce le rôle des enseignants d'aider les enfants à devenir des individus plus responsables ? Si oui, pourquoi ? Si non, pourquoi ?
7. Est-ce que vous pensez à des exemples des choses que votre enfant a faites à l'école qui l'ont aidé à devenir plus responsable ? Pourquoi pensez-vous que cela l'a aidé ?
8. Pensez-vous qu'il y a un lien entre le fait que les élèves soient responsables et le fait qu'ils se sentent bien dans leur peau ? Pouvez-vous expliquer ou me donner un exemple ?
9. Quels sont les besoins de votre enfant cette année par rapport à l'estime de soi ?

Appendix 19: Parent Interview schedule English

Introduction:

I am going to begin with a definition of self-esteem. Self-esteem is, on the one hand, the image an individual has of him/herself and on the other hand, an individual's evaluation of this image and how he/she feels about this image. A person who has high self-esteem has confidence in him/herself in general. He/she recognises his/her strong points and sees him/herself in a positive and realistic light. A person who has high self-esteem feels competent and worthy of love. We could say that an individual with high self-esteem feels generally good about him/herself. Would you like to comment on this definition, add something or disagree with any aspect of the definition?

1. In your opinion, what sort of things in children's lives might help them to feel good about themselves and confident?
2. Do you think teachers have a role in developing self-esteem in pupils (in helping children to feel good about themselves)? If yes, why? If no, why not? (If yes to Q.2) How might teachers do this?
3. Is there anything that you know of that your child's teacher does that helps him/her to feel good about him/herself? Why do you think they were helpful?
4. Could you tell me a little bit about your child at school and at home:
 - a) How would you describe his/her self-esteem?
 - b) Could you describe his/her behaviour at home and outside the home?
 - c) What does he/she do well? What activities or hobbies does he/she have? What does he/she like to do in his/her free time?
 - d) How does he/she get on with other children? Does he/she make friends easily? Does he/she has one friend in particular or many friends? Does he/she easily show his/her emotions?
 - e) What is his/her attitude toward school? Does he/she like to learn new things?
 - f) Is he/she generally a responsible child? (For example, does he/she take initiative/take part in household tasks? Does he/she show responsibility with regard to schoolwork? Does he/she have any responsibilities for family members or pets?
5. What sort of things, if any, do you do with your child to help him/her to become a responsible individual?
6. Do you think that teachers should also have a role in helping children to become responsible individuals? If yes, why? If no, why not?
7. Is there anything that you know of that your child has done at school that has helped him/her to become more responsible? Why do you think they were helpful?

8. Do you think there is a link between helping children to be responsible and them feeling good about themselves and having confidence? What might this be? Can you give me an example?
9. What do you think are the particular needs for this child this year in terms of developing their self-esteem?

Appendix 20 : Participation schedule tally sheet

Participation schedule tally sheet date: lesson: time:

Pupil N ^o	Participation- pupil initiated			Participation- teacher initiated		
	Raises Hand	Contributes ideas	Asks question	Gives full response	Gives limited or cautious response	Gives no response
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						

Remarks:

Appendix 21 : Example of observation recording

Participation schedule tally sheet date: 10/06/08 lesson: Current events: debate on news article 'strawberry flavoured cigarettes'

Pupil N°	Participation- pupil initiated			Participation- teacher initiated		
	Raises Hand	Contributes ideas	Asks question	Gives full response	Gives limited or cautious response	Gives no response
1 Mégane	ZZZ ZZZ ZZZ 	ZZZ				
2 Maud	ZZZ 					
3 Bastien						
4 Yann	ZZZ ZZZ ZZZ 					
5 Melissa						
6 Thiebault						

Time: 13h56-14h12
School: Ecole du Centre
Remarks:

Suggests making cigarettes with no tobacco but with a strawberry taste. Starts talking about another subject.

Doesn't have an opinion or doesn't want to give it.

Appendix 22 : Time sampling schedule

Time sampling schedule

School:

Date:

Lesson/Activity:

Time	Description

Appendix 23: Example of observation recording

Time sampling schedule

School: Ecole du Centre

Date: 10/06/2008

Lesson/Activity: PSCE lesson; Activity 'Sculptors'

Time	Description
15h06	Teacher plays a Gregorian chant to calm them down. -plays a piece of music -children must think of a feeling, a situation & sculpt it with the play-dough. -classical music
15h08	Yann: 'Je n'ai pas compris' Teacher: 'Peut-être vous ne savez pas ce que c'est un sentiment. Qui peut donner des exemples?' 'Haine'...'amour' ... 'tristesse' ... 'peur' (answers from the children)
15h11	Maud- has flattened out and made a face. Laughing Mélissa- concentrated- has also flattened Bastien- has finished. Now making comments 'allez, sculpte, allez, un sentiment!'
15h12	Thiebault has finished.
15h13	Mégane is still working intently.
15h14	Yann- very applied, using a compass (to make lines).
15h15	Teacher asks children to present their sculptures Mégane: 'un <i>broken heart</i> . C'est un cœur brisé. Ca représente le désespoir. Teacher: 'Pourquoi un cœur?' Mégane: 'C'est comme deux adultes qui s'aiment et puis qui ne s'aiment plus.' Teacher: 'Mais pourquoi un cœur?' Mégane: 'Parce que c'étaient des cœurs.' Maud: 'C'était peut-être son cœur à elle.' Teacher: 'Montre-moi le tien.' Maud: C'est un visage qui est triste. Il pleure. C'est comme quand j'ai perdu ma tante. J'ai trouvais que c'était injuste.

15h20	<p>Teacher: Qu'est-ce qu'on peut ressentir? Maud: La colère. Teacher: Esy-ce que quelqu'un a représenté la colère?</p> <p>Sabrina: Oui. Quand mon chat est mort.</p> <p>Yann: '[C'est] un visage qui représente la joie parce que ça m'a fait penser à des bons moments avec des copains.</p> <p>Mélissa: J'ai aussi fait un visage qui sourit. Ca represente la joie parce que ça s'est arrangé avec les filles de la classe.</p> <p>Teacher: Qu'est-ce que ça fait quand on est dans la joie?</p>
15h23	<p>Thiebault: 'J'ai fait un bonhomme qui rit parce qu'il est bien dans la vie.'</p> <p>Teacher: 'Ca te fait penser à quoi? Qu'est-ce qui te rend heureux?'</p> <p>Thiebault: Quand j'ai eu un frère.</p> <p>Bastien: 'Le sentiment c'est ...'</p> <p>Teacher: 'A quoi ça t'a fait penser?'</p> <p>Bastien: 'Aussi à des copains.'</p> <p>Teacher: Est-ce que c'est plus facile de penser à des chose agréable ou desagréable?</p> <p>Des enfants: 'Désagréable!'</p>
15h28	<p>Thiebault: 'C'est comme des rêves.'</p> <p>Teacher: A quoi ça nous a servi de faire cette activité?</p> <p>Teacher: Ca permet de se poser la question sur ce que l'on ressent.</p>

Appendix 24 : Narrative description schedule

Narrative description schedule

School:
Date:
Lesson/Activity:

Time	Description

Appendix 25: Example of Observation recording : Narrative description

Narrative description schedule

School: Ecole des Vergers

Date: 01/02/2008

Lesson/Activity: Class council

Time	Description
15h10	Rangement
	Ordre de Conseil (announced & written on board)
15h15	<p>-contrats -comment va la classe -ceintures -jeu -rangement -félicitations/critiques</p> <p>Mme Normand demande à la classe s'il y a des sujets à aborder pendant le conseil, sont suggérés: -jeu -rangement + des choses qui sont mis en critiques/félicitations</p> <p>Président du conseil: Benjamin</p> <p>R.: [on doit] voir pour son contrat [le contrat de Raymond] 'j'arrête de crier quand les copains me gênent'. Les élèves s'expriment: -orange-rouge parce qu'il crie encore -Mme N. décide de lui mettre vert-orange pour l'encourager</p>
15h25	<p>Un élève: 'C'est difficile de changer.' Les autres élèves ne sont pas d'accord, surtout Jérôme. Jérôme: 'Il ne le mérite pas!'</p> <p>R: 'Elise. Contrat 'J'arrête de bavader' Les élèves s'expriment = rouge/rouge-orange Ils pointent les choses qu'elle fait encore.</p> <p>Mme Normand lui donne vert-orange: 'Elle a encore des efforts à faire' Ophélie- contrat 'J'arrête de bavarder'. Les élèves s'expriment: 'Elle bavarde encore' 'Elle fait des bruits'. Mme Normand lui met un vert-orange et lui dit que à chaque fois qu'elle lui dit quelque chose elle n'est pas d'accord.</p> <p>Jean- voudrait un contrat mais même sans contrat il a fait beaucoup de progrès.</p>

<p>15h42</p>	<p>La maîtresse le félicite et souligne qu'il n'a pas besoin de contrat et qu'il doit continuer.</p> <p>Comment va la classe</p> <p>Jérôme: se plaint que les CE2 bavarde trop et qu'ils sont dérangés</p> <p>Bryce: La classe ne va pas bien. Il avait reçu un mot avec des choses 'méchantes'</p> <p>Cédric: 'Moi, la classe va bien.'</p> <p>Cappucine: 'Je trouve que ça va bien mais des fois on discute, 'ma table va bien'.</p> <p>Léon: 'Elle va bien parce que à ma table j'entend Elise et Raymond.'</p> <p>Jean: 'Elle va bien sauf que vous devez venir de temps en temps.'</p> <p>Ceintures</p> <p>Maxence (ceinture orange): 'Je ne sais pas... parce que le soin... c'est pas ça'</p> <p>Jean (jaune): 'Tu as fait des progrès tu upeux l'avoir'.</p> <p>Prochain conseil: On parle des ceintures de Céleste et Raymond.</p> <p>Jeux dans la cour/récré</p> <p>Bryce: 'Je me retrouve souvent seul. On voudrait jouer avec d'autres'.</p> <p>Céleste: 'J'ai joué avec ... et cet après-midi j'ai demandé si je pouvait jouer avec et elle a dit non.'</p> <p>Bryce: 'Avec Jérôme, on ne s'amuse pas trop.'</p>
<p>15h58</p>	<p>Mme Normand dépense beaucoup d'énergie à réexpliquer les règles du conseil: 'Comment va la classe, ce n'est pas un lieu pour des critiques envers des camarades.'</p> <p>Jérôme: 'Mais, c'est pas grave!'</p> <p>Jean: 'Les CP bloquent la porte'</p> <p>Mme Normand: 'Qu'est-ce qu'on peut faire pour régler ce problème?'</p> <p>Jérôme: 'Ranger les jeux dans les toilettes des filles.'</p> <p>Mme Normand: Qu'est-ce qu'on peut faire avec la classe à côté?</p> <p>Mme Normand: 'Les deux délégués pourraient aller voir avec la classe à côté'. Ils fixent une date et une heure.</p> <p>Mme Normand rappelle à la classe de ne pas jeter les cerceaux .</p>

Appendix 26: Participation schedule tally sheet pilot

Pupil N°	Participation-pupil initiated			Participation-teacher initiated		
	Raises Hand	Contributes ideas	Asks question	Gives full response	Gives limited or cautious response	Gives no response
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						

Types of participation :

Raises hand

Gives limited response

Contributes ideas

Cautious, subdued response

Offers no response

Appendix 27 : Time sampling schedule pilot 1

Time sampling schedule pilot 1

Pupil N°1

Pupil N°2

Pupil N°3

Pupil N° 4

Pupil N°5

Pupl N°6

Appendix 28 : Time sampling schedule pilot 2

school : date : lesson : time :

Pupil 1	Pupil 2	Pupil 3	Pupil 4	Pupil 5	Pupil 6

Appendix 29: Time sampling schedule pilot 3

Time sampling schedule pilot 3

School:

Date:

Lesson/Activity:

Focus children observed:

Time interval:

Time	Description

Appendix 30 : Sample of semi-structured teacher interviews (mid-year, French)

2^e Entretien Enseignant Mme Normand

Est-ce que tu pourrais me dire quelles activités et quelles pratiques ont bien marché ? Pourquoi à ton avis cela a-t-il bien marché ? Quels sont tes critères pour déterminer si une leçon a bien marché ou pas ?

Ce qui marche bien c'est le travail de group. Des enfants comme Bryce arrive à s'intégrer à travailler dans un group. Ce qui en début d'année ne marchait pas bien. Bon, ça ne concerne que Bryce. Il n'arrivait pas à s'intégrer, il voulait faire son truc. Ca maintenant, il arrive bien à le faire. Après par rapport aux activités que tu nous as proposées, bon ça marche bien, bon maintenant, on va vers Bryce, il n'y a pas de problème si quelqu'un doit s'asseoir sur les genoux de Bryce mais il y a de temps en temps, une fois on a fait un bilan quelqu'un a dit, mais oui, il y a Bryce, on ne veut pas aller vers Bryce. Alors que ça ne s'était pas du tout ressenti pendant l'activité. Donc il y a un quand même encore un petit peu ce phénomène de rejet. Mais, maintenant il est bien intégré. Maintenant ça fonctionne bien. Au niveau des responsabilités dans la classe, c'est pareil, ça fonctionne bien sauf pour Céleste, Céleste qui refuse de prendre quoi que ce soit comme responsabilité. Donc de temps en temps je la force un petit peu en lui mettant quelqu'un avec elle pour l'aider, mais si ce n'était qu'elle, elle ne prendrait aucune responsabilité même des choses très très simples ou elle ne peut rien faire de mal.

Les métiers ça va. Bryce fait son travail, tous ceux que tu suis font leur travail, sauf Céleste qui n'aimerait pas. Au niveau du conseil, ça se passe bien, Bryce avait dit (ce que je t'avais dit une fois ça va bien) qu'il se sentait bien dans la classe et qu'il était vraiment content. Au niveau des ceintures il avance bien. Au dernier passage des ceintures il n'a pas eu sa ceinture parce que pour l'écriture, ou il n'est pas facile des fois donc il a tapé du pied, il a tapé un bon coup de pied par terre mais il ne s'est pas mis à pleurer et au bout de cinq minutes il a de nouveau participé au conseil. Donc, on va repasser des ceintures demain pour ceux ne les ont pas eu. Il arrive maintenant qu'il ne pleure pratiquement plus. Au moment du conseil il est de moins en moins critiqué, c'était surtout lui qui était beaucoup critiqué. Il est beaucoup moins critiqué et il y a des retours très positifs de lui par rapport au groupe. Il y a des petits conflits-avec Cédric par exemple qui se moque de lui de temps en temps, mais surtout par rapport à l'ensemble de la classe. Il est vraiment beaucoup mieux intégré.

Céleste, au conseil elle ne participe vraiment très peu. C'est pareil pour la ceinture je la sollicite mais elle est absente, je ne sais pas si elle a sa ceinture blanche alors qu'elle est tout à fait capable de l'avoir.

Les activités que l'on fait dans le couloir au début ils avaient du mal à accepter celles avec lesquelles on devait se toucher ou s'asseoir. Céleste a vraiment un rejet de son, du corps en général, elle me dit 'c'est dégueulasse de s'asseoir sur les genoux de quelqu'un' ou de toucher quelqu'un au genou ou au coude ça c'est quelque chose qu'elle n'aime pas du tout. Sans ça les autres ont vraiment bien apprécié. Toutes les activités, il n'y a eu aucune des activités ou il ne voulait pas participer. Même par rapport à Bryce, il n'y a eu aucun rejet pour prendre des

affaires de Bryce ou toucher Bryce, ça c'est bien passé. En quoi ça prouve que c'est quand même un groupe qui est soudé quoi. Par contre je me rends compte que c'est des pratiques qui marchent avec moi mais c'est pas adapté quand on est dehors de la classe. Si ce sont des choses à faire à mi-temps Il faut vraiment que les deux soient dedans. Des qu'il y a quelqu'un qui vient, vendredi il y a eu un remplaçant par exemple ça c'est très mal passé pour Bryce, il est sorti, il s'est mis à pleurer. C'est des pratiques qui fonctionnent, mais dès qu'il y a une personne dans la classe... avec Clara ça commence à marcher parce que ça fait deux ans qu'elle est là. Ca c'est un peu les limites du dispositif et surtout dans ma classe.

Est-ce qu'il y a des activités qui ont bien marché, des activités, des activités que tu fais dans le couloir ?

Il y a une qui n'a pas bien marché, mais ça c'était de ma faute parce que je l'avais mal mise en œuvre c'est celle des paires parce que je n'avais pas très bien compris, je ne voyais pas trop bien l'intérêt et je trouvais ça un peu limité. Ce qui a vraiment bien marché c'était l'activité avec des ânes parce qu'ils ont vraiment exprimé des choses intéressantes. Quand on a fait le bilan en fait ils ont reparlé des autres activités qu'on avait fait, par exemple l'activité ou on essaie de se lever à deux ils ont dit tiens les ânes ils ont fait comme nous quand on était dans le couloir et qu'on était dos à dos on ne pouvait pas se lever tout seul, il fallait qu'on se mette à deux. Là ils ont, avant je n'étais pas sur qu'ils fassent le lien entre les activités, parce que toi tu venais de temps en temps. Au moment du bilan je n'étais pas sur qu'ils avaient compris, on faisait toujours le bilan par rapport à la coopération, mais je ne suis pas persuadée que c'était bien compris pour eux, tandis que là quand on a parlé des ânes, c'est vrai que est-ce que c'était parce que c'était une activité plus sur table ou ils étaient plus concentrés que dans le couloir, mais c'est vrai qu'ils ont pensé aux activités qu'on avaient fait avant, donc l'activité ou ils devaient se lever et une autre activité ou s'ils n'étaient pas à deux ça n'allait pas.

Ce qui a aussi bien marché aussi c'est quand ils étaient bandés des yeux, s'asseoir sur les genoux et reconnaître la voix de la personne. On a fait aussi avec des cerceaux. Les chaises musicales dans les cerceaux-il y avait un petit peu de disputes ils se poussaient un petit peu, donc c'était un peu moins satisfaisant. Ils se poussaient, ils étaient obligés de sortir.

Si tu dis que ça a bien marché quelles sont tes critères ?

Il n'y a pas eu de rejet. Je n'ai pas commencé tout de suite avec des activités ou ils devaient se toucher, parce que j'avais vraiment peur qu'il y ait des rejets par rapport à Bryce, que Jérôme ne veuille pas qu'on le touche ou être en contact avec les autres. Et c'est pour ça que j'ai commencé par le blason, je crois que j'ai fait deux activités sur feuille. Je crois que si j'avais commencé par des activités ou ils se touchaient tout de suite, ça n'aurait pas ...(inaudible). Déjà qu'il n'y ait pas de conflit, qu'ils s'acceptent, qu'ils acceptent de toucher les autres, les affaires des autres, et puis au moment du bilan, qu'ils voient un petit peu à quoi ça a servi. Jusqu'à l'activité de l'âne c'est pas que je trouvais que c'était artificiel mais une fois que l'activité était fini j'avais l'impression que c'était d'activité en activité, et qu'on ne reparlait pas des autres activités et c'est vraiment l'activité de l'âne. C'est là où ils ont reparlé de ce qu'on avait fait avant et là je me suis rendu compte qu'ils faisaient le lien entre toutes ces activités ou il fallait céder et ils ont aussi parlé de ce qui se passait en classe quand il y avait des conflits et qu'on essayait de trouver des solutions au conseil. Parce que avant ça restait des choses très ponctuelles.

Ca a concrétisé un petit peu ...

Ca a concrétisé. Parce que avant ils n'avaient jamais fait le rapprochement, en tout cas ils ne l'avaient jamais dit, ils l'avaient peut-être fait dans leur tête mais ils ne l'avaient jamais dit.

Ils sont un peu jeunes aussi. J'ai vu que ce n'est pas pareil qu'avec les CM2 qui ont plus de maturité.

C'est vraiment l'activité de l'âne ou ils ont pu se concentrer et qu'ils ont fait le lien.

Par rapport aux activités je ne vois aucune qui n'a pas vraiment bien marché. C'est pas toujours régulier- c'est par rapport aux enfants, par rapport à ce qui se passe dans la classe. Dans l'ensemble ça se passe bien. Je n'ai pas le même écho pour tout le monde ça c'est sur. Par exemple c'est des choses, je ne sais pas si ça l'a aidé ou pas pour son estime d'elle parce que c'est un petit peu comme si elle était absente. Alors, après est-ce que c'est vraiment comme ça, je ne sais pas, est-ce que quelque part au fond d'elle elle l'intègre quelque part ?

Est-ce que tu as des exemples des influences des pratiques sur l'estime de soi ?

Le tout en fait. Parce que je crois que le tout se tient. Si tu fais un truc, si tu fais juste une chose, tu fais que des métiers, tu n'auras pas le même résultat. Mais vu que tout est relié en fait. Le noyau dur c'est vraiment le conseil et vu qu'au conseil on parle des contrats quand on change du métier on parle des métiers, on parle des conflits et ce qui se passe en classe ça fait que tout est relié. Donc, à partir du moment où tout est relié ça a une influence sur le comportement des enfants et je dirais que ça marche. Mais si tu fais que des contrats, par exemple, tu donne un contrat à un élève et que le contrat tu t'occupe de ce contrat juste avec l'enfant, ça marchera pas. Sinon j'ai des stagiaires ou la maîtresse ne veut pas que ce fasse le bilan il n'y a pas de conseil, le bilan n'est pas fait avec les autres l'influence du contrat c'est zéro. Mais là comme le bilan du contrat qui est fait avec l'ensemble de la classe avec le groupe, ça fonctionne vraiment bien. Il y a plein d'enfants qui n'ont presque plus de contrats maintenant. Tu vois, Bryce n'a pas eu du contrat, Jérôme en avait en début de l'année parce que qu'il tapait trop et il disait des gros mots. Mais Jérôme maintenant c'est fini. Le fait qu'ils doivent rendre des comptes devant la classe, ça fonctionne vraiment bien. Et après t'as des ceintures, ça en découle. Puisque à partir du comportement qu'ils ont-ils peuvent changer de ceinture et avec les ceintures ils peuvent avoir un métier. En fait tout ça leur donne vraiment envie de progresser parce que c'est un tout. Je pense que les activités proposées c'était aussi bien parce qu'ils apprenaient à se découvrir et puis à aller vers les enfants vers lesquels ils ne seraient pas allés sans cela. Ils ne seraient pas allés s'asseoir sur les genoux d'un tel ou d'un tel. Ca leur montre aussi qu'ils peuvent y aller et puis qu'il ne va rien se passer.

Est-ce qu'il y a des enfants qui n'ont pas de métier ?

Ils peuvent tous avoir un métier par contre les métiers ou il y a le plus de responsabilité, c'est là où il faut avoir la ceinture la plus élevée. Parce que par exemple, pour avoir le métier de facteur, moi je leur dis que si vous laissez vous promener dans le couloir tout seul, il faut vraiment que je puisse avoir confiance en vous, je ne peux pas envoyer quelqu'un ou je sais qu'il va passer aux toilettes ou qu'il va allumer le robinet. Mais sans ça ils ont tous accès à un métier.

Je reviens sur notre premier entretien, par exemple sur ce que tu as dit par rapport au tutorat.

Il y en a eu très peu cette année. Il n'y en a pas eu besoin cette année.

Est-ce que tu as remarqué si les projets ont eu une influence sur les élèves ?

Quand ils participent, quand ils disaient les poèmes à la fête de Noël, c'est quelque chose qu'ils préparent en classe, qu'ils vont montrer aux parents, tout ce qui est projet, tout ce qu'on a préparé pour l'exposition de la classe verte, ça c'est vraiment des choses que les enfants sont heureux de faire et quand ils montrent aux parents ils sont vraiment, ça renforce l'estime d'eux-mêmes. Et là ils participent, même Céleste participe aussi à ce moment là.

Quand il y a lien avec quelque chose par rapport à un projet. Bon ce n'est pas une participation très très active mais, disons, là elle participe quand même plus à la vie de la classe. (38min restant)

Lors du premier entretien tu as parlé du fait de 'reconnaître l'enfant' et de 'leur donner envie d'apprendre' est-ce que tu aurais des exemples ou tu as pu reconnaître l'enfant ?

J'essaie de les solliciter un maximum pour qu'ils aient envie de participer et qu'ils se rendent compte qu'ils font des progrès. Je ne perds pas beaucoup de temps, enfin, je n'essaie pas de présenter des situations très très originales pour les faire rentrer dans une leçon. Parce que je trouve que c'est un peu une perte de temps de trouver des textes, des super textes, bon je prends des choses intéressantes, mais je trouve que la manière de faire est beaucoup plus importante pour qu'ils aient envie de chercher et de trouver que de perdre son temps à trouver des trucs un peu abracadabrantes et après tu te rends compte que ça ne marche pas mieux quoi. Oui, dans la manière de les solliciter et de, je ne sais pas trop comment l'expliquer, mais, par exemple Bryce va participer aux fractions, il va répondre et il va répondre correctement.

Quand je fait un rappel de leçon, je leur demande à tous, je ne leur demande pas simplement la réponse mais comment ils ont fait pour trouver, puis pourquoi ils ont dit ça, de se justifier, de me dire 'si c'est le sujet c'est parce que je peux encadrer par c'est qui et ils sont là, à chaque fois on travaille sur la nature et la fonction des mots et toutes les nouvelles natures et fonctions qu'on a travaillé pendant la période et ils se rendent compte qu'au fur et à mesure notre liste, elle s'allonge et que tout ce qu'on a appris, on sait reconnaître l'attribut parce qu'il vient derrière un verbe d'état mais maintenant on le redit. Et ça pour eux c'est important de se rendre compte que ce qu'on apprend c'est important et que on en a besoin et quand on fait le bilan comme ça de cette leçon, là ils se rendent vraiment compte parce que tout ce qu'on a appris, on va s'en servir, travailler sur les accords et c'est pas toujours une leçon comme ça travailler dans le vide, et s'en sert après quoi.

Donc, tu essaies de le rendre plus concret.

Plus concret oui.

Est-ce que tu aurais d'autres choses à dire par rapport au retour du group ?

Oui, pour dire ce qui va ce qui ne va pas, pour encourager. De toute façon ça, ça ne se fait pas dans n'importe quelle condition, parce que c'est souvent ce qui fait peur. Le group, ils vont se tirer dedans, ils vont s'attendre à la sortie de l'école, ça ne s'est jamais passé. Même après des conseils très houleux, il n'y a jamais eu, depuis le temps que je fais ça, il n'y a

jamais eu de règlements de compte à la récréation ou à la sortie de l'école. Mais c'est vrai que c'est important. Ils s'en rendent compte aussi. Dans la classe cette année il n'y a pas de gros élément perturbateur mais quand il y a vraiment quelqu'un qui dérange et qu'on met des aménagements et que tout le monde est d'accord, la personne qui bénéficie de ces aménagements, elle s'en rend compte, elle en est consciente quoi, donc, elle va avoir aussi envie de progresser parce qu'elle sait qu'il y a le group qui fait des efforts pour elle, donc, elle va avoir envie de faire des efforts pour le groupe aussi. Bon, ça va pas tout résoudre, mais ça aide à progresser.

Est-ce qu'il y a un exemple précis cette année ?

Ben, par exemple chez Joel, l'année dernière il tombait toujours de sa chaise, cette année il l'a fait une fois, on lui a dit 'maintenant tu tombes plus de ta chaise, tu es en CE2, donc il se balance encore, quand il se balance, il fait du bruit, soit il fait du bruit avec sa chaise, soit il tape dans la table, soit il tape contre le radiateur, on lui a dit s'il se balance tout la journée ça dérange tout le monde. Donc, maintenant, il essaie de se balancer le moins possible, il y a des fois ça se passe très très bien, en plus on lui a dit qu'on lui donnait pas de contrat parce que c'est quelque chose qu'il peut faire tout seul. Pui bon, il y a des semaines ou ça se passe un petit peu moins bien ou il va plus se balancer. Mais, disons, il sait quand même qu'il y a des autres, on en a parlé au conseil, on a parlé de lui au conseil, on lui a dit qu'on avait envie qu'il arrive à plus se concentrer donc quelque part il va faire plus d'effort que si c'était que la maîtresse qui lui demandait d'arrêter de se balancer. C'est vrai que ça fonctionne, alors pas toujours parce qu'il y a des jours ou il n'arrive pas du tout à se concentrer, alors là il va se balancer toute la journée. Au moins il ne tombe plus de sa chaise non plus. Au début de l'année, il a été félicité au moins deux fois au premier conseil, ceux qui était avec lui l'année dernière lui ont dit, mais tu ne tombe plus de ta chaise c'est bien, alors il n'a plus envie de tomber de sa chaise, ça c'est fini. Après il en a d'autres, il y a Bryce qui pleurait au début de l'année aussi. Ca c'est aussi terminé.

Est-ce que tu as envie de dire quelque chose par rapport aux 'lieux de parole' le 'quoi de neuf' par exemple ?

Ben, le quoi de neuf permet à tout le monde un petit peu de prendre la parole pour raconter, ben, Bryce par exemple qui reste encore relativement seul à la récréation qui n'a pas toujours quelqu'un avec qui jouer, ben, au moins c'est un moment au cours duquel il peut faire part de ce qu'il fait le weekend et puis il est susceptible aussi d'intéresser d'autres enfants. On pourrait éventuellement venir jouer chez lui, il a dit une fois qu'il avait joué je ne sais plus le jeu, sur sa game-boy et puis quelqu'un lui a dit, 'ah oui, il est bien ce jeu' et Bryce lui a dit 'et ben tu pourras venir jouer chez moi'. Par contre je ne sais pas si ça s'est concrétiser ou pas mais ça permet de choses comme ça ou de découvrir qu'un tel il aime aussi des araignées. C'est pas simplement raconter pour raconter mais c'est aussi de se trouver des points communs avec des enfants avec lesquels on n'aurait peut-être pas... Après c'est pareil, par exemple Céleste, elle ne raconte pas souvent grande chose. Elle écoute, mais...

Tu as parlé des projets et des chefs de projets...

Mais là en ce moment on vient de finir notre projet pour l'expo de la classe verte la semaine dernière, pour l'instant on a plus rien. Mais les projets c'est bien parce que ce sont les enfants qui régulent les projets. Avec mon aide évidemment. Mais donc, il y a quelqu'un qui s'occupe du projet, mais bon qui s'occupe, mais c'est pas lui qui est responsable de tout c'est quand

même moi aussi qui suis là pour l'aider quoi. Mais on commence, on se fait un échancier avec des noms à côté, bon, pour l'expo il fallait finir des dessins, il y avait plein de choses à faire. Mais s'ils font pas, c'est pas fait, et c'est pareil, ils sont aussi responsable devant le group. Donc, après du coup, ça a pas été fait. Tu vois, quand l'expo était fini ils devaient décrocher les dessins et puis les ranger et puis ils ont décroché n'importe comment, ils n'ont pas enlevé la pâte à fixe j'ai retrouvé des dessins mais je n'ai pas leur rendre parce que les dessins n'étaient pas triés n'étaient pas... Donc c'est des choses aussi qui leur montre que quand on doit faire quelque chose il faut le faire bien. Et ils s'investissent, Céleste s'est investie aussi. Ils s'investissent tous bien.

Des HLM tous les parents de ma classe sont venus. Les parents de Bryce sont venus. Tous les deux ils étaient là.

Appendix 31: Sample of semi-structured teacher interviews (mid-year, English)

Could you tell me about some of the activities and some of the methods that worked well? Why did they work well in your opinion? What criteria do you use to assess whether a lesson has gone well or not?

Working in groups worked very well. Children like Bryce are able to fit in and work in a group which wasn't the case in the beginning of the year. That doesn't concern Bryce though. He couldn't integrate himself; he wanted to do his own thing. Now he's fine with it. As for the activities you suggested; well, they're working well; The others now get close to Bryce. Nobody has a problem if they have to sit on his lap during the activity (Comfortable Coco activity). But from time to time during the feedback session some children had mentioned not wanting to get close to him. That wasn't apparent at all during the activity. So although there is still a slight element of rejection, overall he is now well integrated in the class. Now it's going well. In terms of responsibilities in the class, it's the same thing, it's going well except for Céleste. Céleste refuses to take on any responsibilities. So sometimes I force her a little bit by putting her with someone to help her, but if she was by herself; she wouldn't take on any responsibility at all, even very very little things she can't get wrong.

Jobs are going alright. Bryce gets on with his work, all those you're observing are getting on with their work, except for Céleste who doesn't want to. As for the class council, that's going well. One time during the council Bryce spoke up (like I'd told you once that it was going well) and said he really felt good in the classroom and that he was really happy. He's really making good progress with the behaviour belts. We distributed the behaviour belts last week and he didn't get his because his writing hadn't improved enough, and it is a difficult level to attain. So, he stamped his foot, he gave it a good stamp but he didn't start crying and five minutes later he was participating again in the council. He almost never cries in class anymore. During the class council he is criticised less and less. He was the one that was especially criticised a lot. He's a lot less criticised and he gets some very positive feedback from the group. There are small conflicts with Cédric for example who teases him sometimes, but mostly in terms of the whole class. He's much better integrated.

Céleste really doesn't take part very much in the class council. It's the same with the belts, I try to get her attention but she's distracted, I don't know if she's got her white belt but she's perfectly capable of getting it.

The activities we do in the corridor at first they couldn't cope with the ones where you have to touch or sit on each other. Céleste strongly rejects her, her body in general, she says to me "it's gross sitting on someone's knees or touching someone on their knee or elbow that's something she really doesn't like at all. Apart from that the others really enjoyed it. All the activities, there wasn't a single activity they didn't want to do. Even Bryce, there wasn't any rejection taking Bryce's things or touching him, that went well. That proves that it's the group that's actually united, you know. Even so, I realise that these are methods that work for me but they aren't adapted for when we're outside of the classroom. If these are things you do part-time they [both teachers] should really both be included. As soon as there is someone else who comes, Friday, for example, there was a supply teacher and things didn't go well for Bryce at all. He left the classroom and started crying. They're methods that work, but as soon as there's someone [from outside] in the classroom... it's starting to work with Clara [the

second teacher] because she's been there for two years now. Those are the limits of the methodology a bit and especially in my class.

Are there any activities that worked well, activities, activities you do in the corridor?

There was one that didn't work, but that was my fault because I didn't set it up well it's the one in pairs because I hadn't really understood it, I didn't get the point really and I found it a little bit limited. What worked really well was the activity with the donkeys because they really came out with some interesting things. When we did the review they talked about the other activities we'd done in fact; such as the activity where you try to stand up in twos they said look at the donkeys they did like us when we were back to back in the corridor and we couldn't get up by ourselves, we had to work in twos. They did it there, before I wasn't sure that they made the link between the activities, because you, you came sometimes. During the review I wasn't sure they'd understood, we always did the review based on co-operation, but I wasn't convinced that they really understood that, when we talked about the donkeys though, it's true, is it because it was a desk activity where they concentrated more than in the corridor, but it's true they thought about the activities we'd done earlier, so the activity they had to stand up in and another activity they couldn't do unless they were in twos.

It worked well too when they were blindfolded and they had to sit on each others' knees and guess the person from their voice. We did the one with hoops too. Musical chairs in hoops – there were some little arguments they pushed each other a little bit, it wasn't such a success. They pushed each other and they had to go out.

What are your criteria when you say something worked well?

There wasn't any rejection. I didn't start straight away with activities where they have to touch each other; because I was really worried that Bryce would be rejected, that Jérôme wouldn't want to be touched or have physical contact with the others. And that's why I started with the coat of arms, I think I did two activities on paper. I think if I'd started with the physical contact activities straight away; that wouldn't have ... (inaudible). Once there isn't any argument, they're okay with it, they're okay with touching the others, and the others' things, and then during the review, they get the point of it a bit. Up to the donkey activity it wasn't so much that I found it artificial but once the activity finished I got the impression we were going from one activity to another, and that we didn't talk again about the other activities and it's really the donkey activity. That's when they talked again about what we'd done earlier and when I realised that they were making the connection between all the activities where they had to think about the others and they also talked about what happened in the classroom when there were arguments and we tried to find solutions in the class council. Because before those were very much isolated incidents.

It started to take shape ...

It started to take shape. Because before they hadn't made the link, at least they'd never said it, they did it in their heads perhaps but they never said it.

They're a little young too. I could see it wasn't the same for the CM2 (year 5) who are more mature.

It's really the donkey activity they were able to concentrate on and they made the connection.

As for the activities I can't think of any that didn't really work. It isn't always the same – it depends on the children; and what goes on in the classroom. On the whole it's going well. I haven't got the same feedback from everyone that's for sure. For example there are some things, I don't know if they helped or not for her self-esteem because it's a bit as if she was elsewhere. So, in the end is that really the case, I don't know, somewhere deep inside her is she integrating it a little bit?

Have you got any examples of the practices influencing self-esteem?

Everything in fact. Because I think it rests on the whole thing. If you implement just one thing, if you just give them classroom responsibilities, you won't have the same results. But given that everything here is interrelated in fact ... given that in the class council we discuss their contracts which are eventually linked to their responsibilities so we then talk about classroom responsibilities, and then we talk about conflicts and what is going on in the classroom and in the end it is all related. Once everything has been linked together it has an influence on the children's behaviour and I would say that that is something that works. But if you do the contracts, for example, you give a contract to a pupil and if you look after the contract just with the child; that won't work. Otherwise I've got trainees where the class teacher doesn't want to do the class council so there isn't a council, the feedback from the others doesn't happen and the contract's influence is zero. But here, since the review of the contract is done with the whole class, with the group, that works really well. There are many children who hardly have any contracts now. You see, Bryce hasn't had a contract, Jérôme had one at the start of the year because he stamped his foot too much and swore. But now for Jérôme, it's finished. The fact they had to report back in front of the class, that works really well. And then you've got the belts, that adds to it. Since they can change belts according to their behaviour and they can get a job with those belts. In fact all that really makes them want to make progress, because it all works together. I think that the suggested activities were also good because they were learning to get to know each other and then to get closer to children. they wouldn't have gone up to without that. They wouldn't have gone and sat on so and so's knees. That shows them they can do that and that nothing [bad] will happen.

Are there any children that haven't got a job?

They can all have a job but the jobs with more responsibility, that's where you have to have a higher belt. Because to be the postman for example, personally I tell them 'if you're allowed to go and walk alone in the corridors, I really have to be able to trust you'; I can't send someone I know is going to go to the toilets and turn on the taps. But apart from that they can all have a job.

I'm going back to our first interview, for example, what you said about peer tutoring.

There were really few this year. We didn't need to do them this year.

Have you noticed whether the projects have had an influence on the children?

When they participate, when they said the poems at the Christmas party, that's something they prepare in class, that they're going to show to their parents, everything related to a project, everything they prepared for the nature trip exhibition, these are things the children

are really happy to do and when they show their parents they are really, well, it that builds up their self-esteem. And everyone gets involved then, even Céleste takes part too then. When there's a connection with something to do with a project. Well it isn't a really really involved participation, but, let's say, she still takes part more than in classroom life.

During the first interview you talked about "understanding the child" and "making them want to learn" have you got any examples of where you were able to understand the child?

I try to encourage them as much as possible so that they want to get involved and realise the progress they're making. I don't waste time, I mean, I don't try to introduce situations that are really really original just to get them interested in the lesson. I find looking for texts, for super special texts a bit of a waste of time, I mean, I choose interesting things, but I find the way you do it is much more important so that they want to look for and find things, rather than wasting time finding things that have a little wow factor and then find out they don't really work any better you know? Yes, it's how you get them to do things, and, I don't really know how to explain, but, for example so that Bryce will take part in [the lesson on] fractions, he'll answer and he'll answer correctly.

When I go over the class again, I ask all of them, I don't just ask for the answer, but how they get to the answer, and why they said that, to justify themselves, to tell me if it's the subject it's because I can categorise it by who it is and they are there, each time we work on the nature and the function of words and all the new natures and functions we worked on during the period and they realise that gradually our list, it gets longer and that everything we learned, we know how to recognise its attributes because it comes after a description verb but now we're just going over it again. And that's what's important for them, to appreciate what we learn is important and that we need to learn it and when we do the review like that for that lesson, that's when they actually realise because all that we learned, we're going to use it, to work on agreements and it's always a lesson like that working in the vast open, and we get something out of it after, you know.

So, you try to make it more real.

More real, yes.

Have you got anything else to say about feedback from the group?

Yes, to tell them what's going well, what isn't going well, to encourage them. In any case, we don't do it in just any old way, because that's what often frightens people . [They say] 'the group, they're going to make life difficult for each other, they're going to wait for each other outside the school gates when school's over, but that's never happened. Even after a really tough council, it's never happened since I've been doing it, there's never been any settling of matters during the break or at home time. But it's true it's important. They realise too. In this year's class there isn't a huge trouble-maker but when there is one, when someone is really having a problem in the class and we set up special circumstances and plans to help them out and when everyone is in agreement, the child who benefits from these special circumstances understands it and is aware of it which makes them want to make progress because they know that the group is making an effort for them and they too want to make an effort for the group. Well, that isn't going to solve everything, but it helps us make progress.

Have you got a specific example from this year?

Well, take Joel for example, last year he kept on falling off his chair, this year he did it once, we told him “now you’re not going to fall off your chair any more, you’re in CE2 (year 3)”, so he tips his chair back again, when he tips his chair back, he makes a noise, either he makes a noise with his chair, or he bangs on the table, or he bangs on the radiator, we told him if he tips his chair back all day long it disturbs everyone. So, now, he tries to tip his chair back as little as possible, sometimes that works very very well, we even told him we weren’t giving him a contract because it’s something he can do all by himself. So there are some weeks when it doesn’t go quite so well when he tips his chair back again. But, still, he knows there are others there, we talked about it in the council, we talked to him about it in the council, we told him we’d like him to try to concentrate more, so to some extent he’s going to make more effort than if it was the teacher telling him to stop tipping his chair back. It’s true that works, but not always because on some days when he can’t concentrate at all, then, well, he’s going to tip his chair back all day long. At least he doesn’t fall off his chair any more. At the start of the year, he was congratulated at least twice during the first council, those that were with him last year told him, ‘but you don’t fall off your chair any more, that’s good’, so he doesn’t want to fall off his chair any more, it’s over. After that there are others, there’s Bryce who cried at the start of the year. That’s finished now too.

Is there anything you’d like to say about ‘talking places’ [lieux de parole] the ‘what’s new’ for example?

It’s a time where he can talk about what he did at the weekend and where there’s a chance others might take an interest in him. This might lead other children perhaps to want to go and play at his house. One time he said he had played with some game on his Game-boy and another child said ‘Oh yeah, that game is good’ and Bryce. said ‘well, you can come to my house and play if you want’ So, it’s not just sharing for the sake of sharing, it’s really about finding things you have in common with children you wouldn’t have previously thought of getting to know. It’s the same with others, Celeste for example, she doesn’t tell us about much very often. She listens, but...

You talked about the projects and the project leaders...

As for them, at the moment, we’ve just finished our project on the field trip exhibition last week, we aren’t doing anything at the moment. But the projects, they’re good because the children control the projects. With my help of course. But well, there’s someone in charge of the project, but well who’s in charge, but it isn’t he or she that’s responsible for everything, that’s still me too that’s there to help you know. But we start, we draw up a timetable with names at the side, well, for the exhibition we had to finish the drawings, there was lots to do. But if they don’t do it, it doesn’t get done, and it’s the same, they’re responsible to the group too. So, after a while, that didn’t get done. You see, when the exhibition had finished they had to take down the pictures and then tidy them and then they took them down any old how, they didn’t clean the blu-tac I found the drawings but I didn’t give them back because they weren’t sorted they weren’t... So there are some things as well that show them that when they should do something they should do it well. And they put some effort in, Celeste put some effort in too. They all put some effort in very well.

From the council blocks all the parents from my class came. Bryce’s parents came. There were both there.

Appendix 32 : Sample of focus child interviews (End of year, French)

Mélissa : Entretien fin d'année

Vous avez fait plein d'activités cette année. Des activités un peu nouvelles et qui sortent du cadre. Les jeux coopératifs, les goûters philo, la danse. En histoire, vous avez fait un projet sur la Shoah. Il y a peut-être d'autres choses que j'oublie ?

On a fait en commun...

Des activités que vous avez faites dans la classe, qui sont un peu différentes.

Les chants pour la kermesse.

Ah oui, préparer le spectacle de la kermesse. L'athlétisme, quelqu'un m'en a parlé. Ça demande un peu de coopération. Est-ce qu'il y a des activités que tu as aimées plus que d'autres ?

Les jeux coopératifs.

Lesquels ?

Où on était dans un cerceau et dès que la maîtresse allumait la musique, il fallait sortir, et dès que la maîtresse arrêtait la musique, il fallait rentrer dans un cerceau. Et à chaque fois, elle enlevait un cerceau. Donc, à un moment on s'est retrouvé à 17 dans un cerceau.

Et tu as aimé. Pourquoi ?

Parce que c'est rigolo.

Il y avait d'autres activités rigolotes. Tu penses à celle-là parce que...

Celle aussi où on était une grande ronde et dedans, il y avait quelques élèves. On s'asseyait par terre. La maîtresse donnait un thème, par exemple "notre bonbon préféré". Et le cercle qui était dehors devait tourner. À chaque fois, on savait. Par exemple, pour Armand, son bonbon préféré... Pour chacun on savait son bonbon préféré.

Pourquoi tu as aimé cette activité ?

Parce qu'on sait maintenant ce qu'aime l'autre et ce qu'il n'aime pas.

Tu as peut-être appris des choses sur les autres que tu ne savais pas. Est-ce qu'il y a des activités que tu as moins aimées ?

Je les ai un peu aimées tous.

Est-ce qu'il y a des activités que tu as trouvées difficiles ?

Où on a dû créer une histoire avec des objets et d'autres personnes.

Le tableau vivant. Il fallait raconter une histoire. Pourquoi c'était dur ?

Parce qu'on donne des objets à l'autre, à des autres personnes. Mais en fait après, on doit créer une histoire avec. Et on sait pas trop...

Ce n'est pas évident d'inventer une histoire.

Oui.

Peut-être si on inventait avant, ça serait plus facile ?

Et après, oui.

Après, donner les objets.

Oui.

C'est vrai que des fois, on donne comme ça juste pour s'amuser, mais ça ne représente pas quelque chose.

Oui.

Est-ce que le fait d'avoir participé à ces activités, tu penses que ça a changé ton comportement envers les autres ou ta façon de voir les autres ?

Oui, parce qu'au début, avec Mégane, on s'aimait pas trop, on n'était pas copines. On a eu des histoires. Et maintenant, ça va beaucoup mieux.

Grâce à ces activités ?

Oui.

Qu'est-ce qui a aidé ?

Les deux cercles où on devait changer. On savait ce qu'elle aimait. Elle savait ce que j'aimais, tout ça.

C'était un point de rencontre. Ça vous a obligé à raconter des choses.

Est-ce que tu penses que ces activités en général aident les enfants à mieux s'entendre ou tu penses que ça ne change pas grand-chose ?

Je pense que ça change beaucoup de choses. Parce qu'il y a des personnes qui peuvent avoir une opinion sur d'autres personnes, et en fait, c'est complètement le contraire.

Tu as un exemple, sans donner de nom ? Quelqu'un qui avait une fausse idée de quelqu'un, et ça a changé ?

Si, ma mère a eu une opinion sur quelqu'un d'autre. Et en fait, elle a commencé à comprendre que c'était faux.

C'était en dehors de l'école. OK. Pendant ces activités, le fait de discuter avec les autres, tu penses que ça a aidé les autres à découvrir un côté qu'ils ne savaient pas.

Oui. Ils pensaient que cette personne était comme ça, mais en fait, il y avait autre chose à l'intérieur.

D'accord.

Dans la classe, vous avez des métiers ou des responsabilités. Est-ce que tu peux m'expliquer ce que c'est ?

Par exemple, je suis le responsable facteur. Si la maîtresse a envie de passer un message à Madame Ingerich par exemple, c'est moi qui dois aller le dire à Madame Ingerich. Ou par exemple, quelqu'un de la classe demande à Madame Malavoy de leur prêter les calculatrices, c'est moi qui dois aller le demander.

C'est le métier de facteur.

Oui.

Et à ton avis, ces métiers, ça sert à quoi ?

Ça aide pour le collège, à se repérer déjà dans l'école. Et à avoir des responsabilités par exemple chez soi, directement dans la maison.

Tu penses que ça t'a donné plus d'initiatives au fait de faire des choses à la maison ?

Oui.

Il y a des choses que tu ne faisais pas avant et que tu fais à la maison maintenant ?

Chercher le courrier, descendre la poubelle.

Tu le fais maintenant.

Oui. Et je nettoie par exemple les animaux dans la maison.

Tu t'occupes des animaux à la maison. Qu'est-ce que vous avez comme animaux ?

On a des lapins, des pigeons et un chien.

C'est pas mal.

Quelle responsabilité as-tu aimé le plus ?

Effaceur de tableau.

Pourquoi ?

Parce qu'il y a des personnes qui effacent moins bien que d'autres. Et la maîtresse des fois félicite ceux qui effacent bien. Ceux qui effacent moins bien, quand ils sont effaceurs de tableaux, ils commencent à bien essorer et tout ça.

Est-ce qu'il y a des responsabilités que tu n'as pas aimées ?

Non.

Tu as fait tous les métiers ?

Non. J'ai pas fait... Ah si, je crois que je les ai tous faits.

Et président, c'est un métier un peu difficile. Tu as aimé faire ce métier ?

Ça va.

C'était comme les autres.

Oui, mais il y a juste quand il y a... dès qu'on note au tableau un prénom, on note un prénom, par exemple, je dis un exemple, Lucie, si elle a parlé, on la note. Et après, les autres : qu'est-ce qu'elle a fait ? Et après, on est obligé de se justifier : elle a parlé... et tout ça. Et après, dès qu'on réécrit une personne : c'est pas juste, je te critique...

Ça peut poser des problèmes si tu essaies de faire bien le métier.

Oui.

Est-ce qu'il y a un ou des métiers que tu penses qu'on pourrait ajouter à la liste ?

Je pense qu'on devrait ajouter un métier, mais je sais pas trop comment on pourrait l'appeler. Par exemple, quand il y a une critique pour d'autres classes, qu'il y a une personne du métier qu'on a rajouté qui va dire la critique à celui dans la classe.

Dans une autre classe.

Voilà.

Par exemple, dans la classe de...

De Madame Ingerich, s'il y a une plainte contre Théodore, il y a quelqu'un qui va dire à Théodore qu'il a eu une plainte.

Une sorte de délégué.

Voilà.

C'est une bonne suggestion.

Est-ce que tu peux décrire le conseil de classe ? Qu'est-ce qui se passe dans le conseil ?

Par exemple, on le fait toujours l'après-midi. C'est cette après-midi ou la semaine prochaine. C'est tous les vendredis. Un sur deux. C'est toutes les deux semaines. Et par exemple, cette semaine, peut-être que c'est avec les petits de la classe à Madame Ingerich, et deux semaines plus tard, ce sera dans notre classe. Pendant la récréation, le président et le secrétaire vont écrire toutes les plaintes qu'il y a eues sur une feuille de brouillon. Ils devront dire toutes les plaintes qu'il y a eues contre une personne par exemple. Et la personne qui est critiquée ou félicitée doit dire s'il a fait ça, si c'est vrai ou si c'est faux.

Il se justifie. Il peut parler.

Oui.

Est-ce que tu trouves que le conseil est une bonne chose ?

Oui.

Pourquoi ?

Parce qu'après on peut dire ce qu'on pense sur la critique. Parce qu'en fait, dès qu'on fait une critique, on est obligé de faire une proposition. Donc, on peut donner notre avis sur la proposition.

Quelqu'un qui critique doit proposer quelque chose, et tu peux dire si tu...

Si t'es d'accord ou pas.

D'accord.

Est-ce qu'il y a des parties du conseil qui sont difficiles ou pas nécessaires, à ton avis ?

Qui sont difficiles, c'est quand il y en a qui parlent entre eux, et après, on est obligé d'arrêter le conseil à cause de certains qui parlent entre eux.

Qui dérangent.

Voilà.

Ou alors ?

Ou alors, il y a le président qui dit d'arrêter, mais après, par derrière, ils sont quand même en train de discuter.

Et dans ce cas-là, vous arrêtez le conseil ?

Ça dépend. Un moment, on était avec un autre maître et le maître a dit d'arrêter parce qu'il y en avait plein qui discutaient. Et alors, on n'a pas pu le terminer.

Par rapport à toi dans la classe cette année, est-ce que tu penses que tu as fait des progrès en maths ou en français, ou en d'autres matières ?

Oui, je pense en orthographe. On a fait une évaluation et d'habitude, je devais écrire et j'avais des fautes. Et là, j'ai eu deux A+.

Qu'est-ce qui t'a aidé à faire des progrès dans ce domaine ?

Il y a des soutiens avec Madame Malavoy, si on ne comprend pas quelque chose, on va la voir et elle peut nous expliquer mieux.

En orthographe. Et en d'autres matières, c'est pareil qu'avant ?

Je sais pas.

Quelle est la meilleure chose pour toi dans cette classe cette année ? Qu'est-ce que tu as aimé le plus ?

On avait le droit de faire ce qu'on voulait. Des fois, on a le droit de... Des fois, c'est une journée où on rigole tout le temps, et des fois, la maîtresse dit que si par exemple, on a envie d'effacer le tableau et que ça nous sert plus à rien, on a le droit. Enfin plein de choses.

Vous êtes assez libres.

Oui.

Et par rapport à la façon d'apprendre dans la classe, est-ce que tu avais une certaine liberté?

Oui, parce que quand on recopie des leçons la maîtresse dit : vous pouvez écrire en couleur, vous écrivez en fonction de la place comment vous écrivez. Si elle nous donne un tableau après, par exemple, on peut le coller avant d'écrire ou après d'écrire. Comme on veut.

Vous pouvez choisir comment vous disposez les leçons.

J'ai fait un comparatif entre le questionnaire en début d'année et celui que tu as rempli cette semaine. Normalement, là où ça avait changé, c'était en couleur. Tu peux voir qu'il y a pas mal de choses qui ont changé, des fois beaucoup, des fois légèrement.

"J'aime beaucoup les maths". Et en juin, tu as dit : "j'aime les maths". C'est un peu moins. Est-ce qu'il y a une raison pour ça ?

C'est un peu plus difficile.

Avec le temps, c'est plus difficile. Tu avais l'impression que tu réussissais un peu moins ?

Oui. Parce qu'on avait fait des tableaux de proportionnalité et là, je ne comprenais pas trop.

Tout ça, ça va être repris en 6^e.

En septembre, tu as dit : "je suis très bonne en sport", et au moins de juin, tu as dit : "je suis moyenne en sport". Tu sais pourquoi tu as mis ça ?

Quand je cours par exemple, après... par exemple, là on a fait la rencontre en athlétisme, j'étais 7^e, et toutes mes copines sont avant moi ou après moi.

C'est plutôt par rapport à la course ?

Le saut en hauteur aussi.

Par exemple, en danse, parce que c'est aussi un sport.

Là, ça va.

Et en natation ?

En natation, je fais la natation le mardi et je suis en train de travailler les dauphins de bronze.

D'accord. C'est surtout par rapport à l'athlétisme que tu dis ça.

Oui.

En septembre, tu as dit : "j'arrive parfois à me faire des amis". Et en juin, "j'arrive à me faire des amis facilement". C'est un changement positif. C'est dû à quoi à ton avis ?

Avec les jeux coopératifs.

Tu penses que ça t'a aidé à faire des copines et des copains ?

Oui.

Pourquoi ? Comment ça t'a aidé ?

Déjà à connaître l'autre plus facilement. Et à mieux s'entendre.

En septembre, tu as dit : "je suis parfois contente de moi-même". En juin : "je suis contente de moi-même". Ça aussi, c'est un changement positif.

J'ai des meilleurs résultats et je me fais plus souvent félicitée.

Par les camarades ou par la maîtresse ?

Les deux. Avant que je vienne, on a fait l'actualité et c'était moi qui l'ai représentée. On devait faire un journal télévisé, donc trois informations à peu près. Et ils m'ont tous applaudi. Et la maîtresse m'a dit : ça mérite un A+.

Superbe. C'est que tu as travaillé aussi.

C'était pour aujourd'hui et on l'a eu mardi. Et j'ai travaillé mercredi soir et jeudi soir.

Ça ne se fait pas sans travail. C'est un exercice qui est dur.

Oui, parce qu'il faut regarder tout le monde, il faut articuler, parler bien fort. Et pas rester comme ça sur la feuille.

Tu t'es entraînée à la maison ?

Oui.

Avec un public ou toute seule ?

Avec mes parents.

Ça aide déjà parce qu'il faut quand même le faire. Très bien.

En septembre, tu as dit : "je me sens mal à l'aise quand je dois dire des choses devant la maîtresse". Et en juin : "je me sens parfois mal à l'aise quand je dois dire des choses devant la maîtresse". Un léger mieux. Parfois, tu te sens mal à l'aise. Est-ce que c'est la maîtresse ou le contexte de la classe ?

Quand par exemple il y a Tim, il a dû aussi faire un journal cet après-midi, et en fait, il bafouillait et tout ça. Et j'arrive pas trop à faire, quand je dois dire quelque chose devant la maîtresse.

Quand tu dis quelque chose, tu veux que ce soit bien. Est-ce que tu as marqué ça en pensant à cet exercice-là ?

Oui.

Je pense que tout le monde a pensé à ça. Comme vous êtes en plein dedans.

Là, ça rejoint ce que tu as dit : "j'aime parfois jouer avec d'autres enfants". Et en juin : "j'aime jouer avec d'autres enfants". Je pense que ça se passe bien pour toi avec les autres enfants.

En septembre, tu as dit : "je m'aime parfois comme je suis". Et en juin : "je m'aime assez comme je suis". C'est aussi positif. Tu sais un peu pourquoi ça a changé ?

Parce que je suis un peu plus... je suis... Comment dire ça ? J'ai plus confiance en moi.

C'est venu comment d'avoir plus confiance en toi ?

À cause des jeux.

Ça t'a donné un peu l'occasion de rencontrer d'autres personnes ?

Oui.

Ou autre chose ?

Non, c'est bon.

"J'ai de bonnes notes en maths", "j'ai des notes moyennes en maths". Tu as dit que c'est plus difficile cette année, plus corsé.

"J'aimerais changer un peu de choses chez moi-même", et en juin : "je n'aimerais pas changer beaucoup de choses chez moi-même". C'est assez positif tout ça. Ça rejoint tout ce que tu viens de dire : que tu as plus confiance en toi et que tu as plus d'amis, les résultats sont meilleurs, etc. C'est très bien.

C'est tout. Est-ce que tu veux ajouter quelque chose, ou une question ?

En fait, pourquoi vous avez choisi par exemple plutôt moi, Thiebault, Bastien... ?

Je ne pouvais pas discuter avec tout le monde. Il fallait que je choisisse 6 élèves qui représentaient un peu la classe. Donc, 6 élèves qui n'étaient pas tous pareils. Donc, j'ai discuté un peu avec la maîtresse et j'ai regardé vos questionnaires pour choisir des élèves qui ne se ressemblaient pas. Si j'avais choisi par exemple que des garçons, ça ne pourrait pas représenter la classe. J'ai trois filles, trois garçons. Mais au lieu de te choisir, j'aurais pu choisir Lucie ou quelqu'un d'autre. Mais ça m'a fait plaisir parce que j'ai pu discuter avec vous 6 et vous étiez tous très sympa.

Appendix 33 : Sample transcription of focus child interview (End of year, English)

Melissa : End of Year Interview

Your teacher has been doing some interactive group activities this year such as cooperative games, philosophy for children, dance. In history class, you have been working on a project concerning the Shoah. Is there anything else that I forgot to mention?

Some things we've done together.....

Activities done in class that are a little different.

Songs for the festival

Oh yes, preparing the show for the school festival. Someone told me about an athletics competition. It required a little cooperation. Are there any activities that you enjoyed more than others?

Cooperative games.

Which ones ?

We were standing in a hoop and as soon as the teacher turned the music on, we had to leave the hoops again, when the teacher stopped the music, we had to get back in again. And each time, she took a hoop away. There was a moment where there were seventeen of us in a hoop!

You enjoyed it. Why?

Because it was funny.

There were other fun activities. Are you thinking of this one because...

There was one where we were standing in a large circle and there were a few pupils inside it. We were sitting on the floor. The teacher gave us a topic, for instance our favourite candy. Then the circle that was around the group was to turn each time we knew, for instance, Arnaud's favourite candy was concerning each one of us, we knew what his favourite candy was.

Why did you enjoy this activity ?

Because now, we know what the others like and what they don't like

Maybe you learnt things about others that you didn't know. Were there any activities you didn't like so much?

I quite liked all of them.

Was there anything that you found difficult to do?

We had to create a story with other people [children] and objects.

The drama scene. You had to represent a story. Why was it difficult?

Because we give objects to others, to other people. But afterwards, we have to create a story with it. And we didn't know what to do.

It's not easy to invent a story.

True.

Maybe if we invented first, it would be easier.

And afterwards too, yes.

Give objects afterwards.

Yes.

It's true that sometimes, we give things just like that for fun, but it doesn't represent anything.

Yes.

Do you believe that taking part in these activities has changed your behaviour towards others and the way you consider others?

Yes, because in the beginning, Mégane and I, we didn't like each other. We weren't at all friends. We were having problems all the time. But now, things are much better.

Thanks to these activities??

Yes.

What is it that helped?

The activity with the two circles where we had to change each time ('moving circles' activity) really helped me. I found out what she liked and she found out what I liked. ... Now we know what the others in the class like.

It was a meeting point. It forced you to say things about yourself. Do you think that these activities help children to get on better with each other or do you believe that it doesn't really make a difference?

I think it makes a lot of difference. I really think that it changes a lot of things. Because there are people who can have an idea about other people and in fact the complete opposite is true.

Can you give an example, without mentioning a name? About someone who had a wrong opinion about someone, and it changed ?

Yes, my mother had a wrong opinion about someone. In fact, she has started to realize it was wrong.

This happened outside school. OK. During these activities, you do think that talking with others helped others to find out things about them that they didn't know?

Yes.

They thought that a person was like that, but in fact there was something else inside.

Alright. .

In the classroom, you have tasks to do and responsibilities. Can you explain that to me?

For example, I am responsible for the post. If the teacher wants to give a message to Mrs Ingerich for example, I go and tell Mme Ingerich about it. Or for example, someone from the class asks Mme Malavoy to lend us calculators, so I have to go and ask.

It's the ' postman' job.

Yes.

What do you think these jobs are for?

It helps the school, it helps you find your way around. And it helps you to take on responsibilities at home, right inside the house.

Do you think they [the class responsibilities] helped you take more initiative with regards to doing things at home?

Yes.

Is there anything that you didn't use to do before that you are doing now?

Fetching the mail, bringing down the rubbish.

You do it now.

Yes. For example I clean the animals at home.

You look after the animals. What pets do you have?

We have rabbits, pigeons and a dog.

That's not too bad.

Which task did you enjoy the most ?

Being a blackboard cleaner.

Why ?

Because some people do it better than others. And sometimes the teacher praises those who clean it well. Those who clean less well, when they are blackboard cleaners, [then] start by wringing the sponge properly and things like that.

Are there any responsibilities you didn't like having?

No.

Have you done all the jobs?

No. I haven't... Oh yes, I believe I've done them all.

And being the president [of the class council], that is quite a difficult job. Did you enjoy doing that job?

It's OK.

It was just like the others.

Yes, but when there's... when you write a name on the board, you write a name for instance, I'll give an example, Lucie, if she chatted, we would write her name down. and the others would say: 'what has she done?' And after that, you have to justify yourself : 'she has been chatting'... and all that. And after, when you write someone's name down they say 'it's not fair', 'I criticize you ...'

It can create problems when you try to do that job well.

Yes.

Do you think that there are jobs that you could add to the list ?

I think we could add a job, but I don't really know what to call it. For example, when we want to say something to criticize the other class, there should be someone who has the responsibility to go and tell the other class.

In another class...

Exactly.

For example in the classroom of...

Mrs Ingerich's classroom. There is a complaint about Theodore, someone goes to tell Theodore there was a complaint about him.

A kind of a class representative.

That's right.

It is a good suggestion. Can you describe the class council? What happens during the council?

For example, it always takes place in the afternoon. This week or next week.

Always on a Friday. Once in a fortnight. Every second week.

For example, this week, maybe it would be with the little ones from Mrs Ingerich's class, and two weeks later, it would be in our class.

During the break, the president and the secretary write down all the complaints they received on a paper. For example they will have to present all the complaints about a person they received. The person who is being criticized or praised has to say if she/he has really done that, if it is true or false.

It's to justify themselves, they can explain.

Yes.

Do you think the class council is a good thing?

Yes.

Why ?

Because afterwards you can say what you think about the criticism. Because as soon as you complain about someone, you have to make a proposal. So, we can give our opinion about the proposal.

Someone who criticizes someone has to make a proposal, you have to say if you...

If you agree or not.

Right.

Are there any parts of the council that are difficult or unnecessary, what do you think?

What's difficult, is when some people talk to each other and then, we have to stop the council because people are talking to each other.

They are disturbing.

That's it.

What else ?

When the president says they should stop, but they still talk behind people's backs.

Do you stop the council when this happens ?

It depends. Once, we were with another teacher and the teacher said we should stop because plenty of people were talking .And then, we were not able to finish it.

Now, what about you ? Do you think that you have made progress in Maths or in French or in other subjects this year ?

Yes, I think I improved my spelling. We had an assessment and as usually, I would write and make mistakes. And there, I had two A+.

What helped you make progress in that subject ?

There are times when Mme Malavoy is available for extra help. If you don't understand something you can go see her and she explains things better.

In spelling. And in other subjects, are things the same as before?

I don't know.

What has been the best thing about being in this class during this year ? What have you enjoyed the most about being in this class?

We also had a certain amount of freedom in class. We were allowed to do what we wanted. Sometimes, we could... Some days, we laugh all the time, and sometimes, the teacher says: for example, if we feel like wiping the board, and there is no point in doing it , but we are allowed to do it if we want. Well, a lot of things.

You have a lot of freedom.

Yes.

What about the way you learn, did you have any freedom about that ?

Yes, When we were taking notes the teacher said 'you can write in colour, you can write your lessons how you want. If she gave us a something to glue in the notebook we could write before gluing it or after. It was up to us to decide how we wanted to do it.

You can decide the set up of your lessons yourself.

I compared the questionnaire you filled in at the beginning of the school year with the one you filled in this week. Normally, things that changed were written with colour. You can see that quite a lot has changed, sometimes a lot, sometimes a little.

"I like Maths a lot". And in June, you said: " I like Maths". It's a bit less. Is there a reason for that??

It's a bit more difficult.

It gets more difficult as time goes on. Did you have the impression that you were doing less well ?

Yes. Because we were doing charts with proportions and I didn't understand that very well.

All this will be studied again next year.

In September, you said: "I'm good at sports", and in June you said: "I'm average at sports." Do you know why you wrote that?

For example when I run, then.... For example, we had that athletics meeting, I was 7th, and all my friends were before me or behind me.

Did it have anything to do with the race?

Also with high jumping.

What about dancing, it's also a sport.

That's fine.

What about swimming ?

Swimming. I go swimming every Tuesday and I'm training for 'les dauphins de bronze' award.

Ok. Then you are saying that mainly because of athletics.

Yes.

In September, you said : » sometimes I can make friends ». In June" I can make friends easily", It is a positive change. What is it due to, do you think?

To cooperative games.

Do you think it helped you make friends ?

Yes.

Why ? How did it help ?

First it helped me to know others better. And to get on better with others.

In September, you said : « Sometimes I'm happy with myself ». In June you said » I'm happy with myself ». This is a positive change too.

I have better results and I'm getting praised more frequently.

From your school friends from the teacher ?

Both. Before I came, we were talking about current events and I was in charge of presenting the current events. We had to present the news, about two or three topics . Everyone clapped for me. And the teacher said: you deserve an A+.

Wonderful. This is also because you have worked hard.

It was to be done for today and we were given the assignment on Tuesday. And I worked on Wednesday and Thursday evening.

You need to put work into it. It was a difficult assignment.

Yes, because you have to articulate properly and look at everybody. Not just stare at your page.

Did you practice at home?

Yes.

With an audience or alone?

With my parents.

It helps but you have really done a good job. Well done.

In September, you said : » I feel ill at ease when I have to say things in front of the teacher » and in June » I sometimes feel ill at ease when I have to say things in front of the teacher”. It’s slightly better. Sometimes, you feel ill at ease. Is it because of the teacher or because of the classroom context ?

When Tim is there for example, he also had to present the news this afternoon, and in fact he was stammering and all that. And it’s not easy for me, when I have to say something in front of the teacher.

When you want to say something, you want to do well. When you wrote that down, were you thinking of that particular exercise?

Yes

I think that you were all thinking about that. It’s because you are all in the middle of doing that.

This relates to what you have just said : » I sometimes like playing with other children ». And in June : « I like playing with other children” I believe things are going well between you and other children.

In September you said:” Sometimes I like myself the way I am” and in June:” I quite like myself the way I am”. It’s also positive. Have you got an idea why this has changed?

Because I am a little more... I am... How can I say that ? I am more self confident.

How did that happen ?

Because of the games.

Did it give you the opportunity to meet other people?

Yes.

Or is it something else?

No, it's OK.

"I have good results in Maths », "I have average results in Maths". You have said it was more difficult this year, it's harder.

« I'd like to change a few things about myself », and in June : » I wouldn't like to change much about myself ». All this is quite positive. It relates to what you have just said : You are more self-confident and you have more friends, your results are better and so on. It's very good.

That's it. Would you like to add anything, or ask a question ?

Actually, why did you choose me rather than someone else? And Thibault, Bastien...?

I couldn't talk with everybody. I had to choose six pupils who more or less represented the class. In fact, I mean six pupils who are different from each other. Therefore I have talked to the teacher and I have looked at your questionnaires to choose pupils who were different from each other. If I had chosen only boys, it wouldn't have represented the class. I have three girls, three boys. But instead of choosing you, I could have chosen Lucie or someone else. But I enjoyed talking to the six of you and you were all very nice.

Appendix 34: Sample of interview analysis (English)

Parent Interview Analysis 1

This example presents the analysis of one question from the semi-structured interviews conducted with the parents/step-parents of the focus children (one respondent number per family). It focusses on the first question out of the nine contained in the semi-structured interview schedule which represents approximately 10% of the data collected during these interviews. Interviews were listened to and read several times in order to allow common themes and concepts to emerge. These were then initially coded, using an 'open coding' framework (Rubin & Rubin, 2005).

Q.1.) In your opinion what kind of things in the children's lives could help them to feel good about themselves and confident?
What could contribute to the children feeling confident and contented?

Open coding/emerging themes after initial analysis:

- Meeting other children/people
- Not saying rude nasty things
- Finding time to talk
- Helping children meet others, get on with others
- Letting them get on by themselves, not doing things in their place
- A balanced home environment
- Spending time together as a family
- A home in the countryside, the influence of nature
- Creating a refuge, a place to go when things are not going well
- Trusting the child, letting him/her experience things first hand
- Encouraging autonomy whilst providing support
- Accepting the child and his/her suggestions/way of doing things
- Encouraging the child
- Praising the child, telling him/her when he/she does something well
- Giving the child responsibilities
- Making time to discuss things, to talk a lot
- Being interested in what the child is doing at school
- Encouraging the child
- Family atmosphere, child must feel comfortable in his/her home environment
- Important to feel accepted by friends, at school
- Being surrounded (supported?) by family, peers at school, friends
- Home environment, living in a natural setting

This framework served as a guide during the second stage of analysis during which the transcripts were then reread and coded using a colour system which allowed common themes to emerge.

Initial thematic colour coding of parent interviews:

P1- Doing something that they want to do. Sports, activities. Contact with others, meeting others, getting to know others, other ways of doing things or of behaving.

P2- Not annoying him/her, not being nasty, not saying rude things. Not saying, you're fat or you've got a big nose, you should never make remarks like that about someone. I teach him that, you should never make fun of people who are different. That's a good start for self confidence. When you're little and people make remarks it's annoying sometimes, so being careful about what you say.

You have to make time to talk to each other.

P3-

Mme : Well if the parents help them to open up to the world, to reach out to others, these are things which are not innate, they are things which can also be learned, respecting others.

Mr : Then you have to let them manage a bit on their own. If it doesn't work out the first time round it doesn't matter, never mind, you mess up, you can do it again, it'll work out, perhaps. That's the way they'll become more confident. Because if it doesn't work out and we don't say anything and we do it, in ten years time they'll never manage it.

Mme : But I think you have to direct them all the same.

Mr : It's not a matter of forcing them but rather of guiding them, sometimes you have to push them a little.

P4- For a start living in a stable home where you can talk about anything with no taboos, I talk about my past life with them. I don't want them to forget where they come from, I don't. My husband has his whole family here, I don't have anyone here, it's something I attach a great deal of importance to. I don't want them to forget that I have a family too.

I have a hard time praising them for anything. It's surely one of my biggest flaws because I feel they have everything they need to succeed. They are not underprivileged, we live normal lives, so because of that, praising them every time they get a good mark or do something well, I just have a hard time with that. This bothers them a lot though, all of them. Perhaps that makes them feel undervalued. But I was never praised either, when I was young. That's why I keep reproducing the same thing, but perhaps I should work on that because it's not good for them.

P5- The family context where there are no problems. Our family is together all the time. They play a lot of sport. We live in an isolated spot. C. has a twin brother but they can be separated.

P6- It's far reaching. They need a sort of refuge within the family where they can shelter if they're not feeling great. Not guiding him too much, letting him make his own way, try things out for himself, even if he falls flat on his face, so to speak, make his own assessment, but then always leave the door open for explanations, provide supervision without restraining him too much, that's my point of view.

P7- I don't know. I accept all his work and guide him. I encourage him, saying 'that's good' and explain a lot. He wanted his presentation to be really good. M. is especially scared of others mocking him. If someone laughs, he thinks it's aimed at him. He doesn't like people

talking about him. He doesn't want us to tell his life story. I try to encourage him. With each child it's different. M. chooses his clothes, it's well drawn, precise.

P8- Giving him responsibilities. Having responsibilities. Because if we are always behind him I think later he's going to be a spoilt little boy, so giving him responsibilities. For example 'Waiting for his little brother to come out of school, watching that nothing happens on the way home, given that his little brother is a bit of a tearaway'. Just to show that he's the big brother, he's the one who has to, when we're not there on the way home, we don't have to be there, he's the big brother who has to take care of the little brother. That's already a kind of responsibility. With his little brother they're fairly inseparable. They're always together, they never do anything without the other one. We can't separate them when we do activities together. I've never had problems there (they get on well together, they have the same interests).

P9- You have to converse a lot, you have to talk a lot. I ask her 'how was your day'. I ask questions about what she has done at school. Encourage her. I encourage her a lot.

P10- Encourage him, praise him but not just that. Tell him when he does something good but not just that. You also have to show them when something isn't good. He shouldn't be full of himself.

P11- I think that at a grassroots level, the family atmosphere, which is very important. A child who feels comfortable in his family circle doesn't ask himself too many questions. So the family atmosphere and then after that, after what is important, especially for M. is school. School, friends, she doesn't have many. On the other hand, she is in utter admiration of Mme M. Anyway, I'm delighted because up until last year M. didn't like going to school much. At least we felt a bit that she was bored because M. is the youngest of a family of four, she has been brought up with older children, it's true to say that for her children of her age bored her a bit, because she has lived with a step brother, she has a nephew, that's not very common for a girl of ten years old. So obviously, she lives grown up things, maybe she has missed out on a stage of her childhood, probably, which meant it took her a long time to settle in at school.

Last year, Mme. M. really boosted her confidence, she supports her which means that M. likes going to school a lot more. She likes Mme M. above all else and if she trusts her, she is less worried about the teasing coming from certain friends who couldn't stand her, who weren't to be quite honest very nice to her.

P12- Mr: Like I've already said, a good environment. Family, school, friends, people around her. bon entourage. The environment if it's high rise and flats (it's not good).

These themes were then compared and contrasted in order to build up categories which would form a coherent picture:

Initial themes which emerged in response to question 1:

- Balanced home/family life- 'family with no problems', 'home as a refuge', 'home climate atmosphere'

- To give them responsibilities/help them become responsible [two types of giving responsibilities, 1 where the parents guide and one where the child is 'on his own' so to speak]
- Allowing *time, space* and *freedom* for **discussion**
- Helping them to be open towards others and willing to make new acquaintances ('aller vers les autres')
- Extra-curricular activities (sports, other activities)
- Teaching the child 'respect' (acting with respect toward others)
- People around them- friends, other children at school, teachers
- Child's 'surroundings'- mostly in reference to living in the countryside, 'close to nature' as opposed to living in 'housing projects' (parents from the school which is located in fairly rural surroundings)
- Encouraging the child
- Not insulting/respecting the child

Refining of categories (1):

Child's surroundings

- Balanced home/family life- 'family with no problems', 'home as a refuge', 'home climate atmosphere'
- People around them- friends, other children at school, teachers
- Child's 'surroundings'- mostly in reference to living in the countryside, 'close to nature' as opposed to living in 'housing projects' (parents from the school which is located in fairly rural surroundings)
- Extra-curricular activities (sports, other activities)

Parents' intervening/teaching

- To give them responsibilities/help them become responsible [two types of giving responsibilities, 1 where the parents guide and one where the child is 'on his own' so to speak]
- Teaching the child 'respect' (acting with respect toward others)
- Helping them to be open towards others and willing to make new acquaintances ('aller vers les autres')

Developing an open/positive relationship

- Allowing *time, space* and *freedom* for **discussion**
- Encouraging the child
- Not insulting the child/respecting/accepting the child

Throughout the study these themes were compared and contrasted with data from the interviews with the focus children and then further refined in relation to the literature. Data

from the focus children interviews allowed further confirmation of some themes and provided insight necessary to the differentiation of other themes:

Refining of categories 2 (In relation to the literature/focus child interviews):

Parental involvement and acceptance

- Allowing *time, space* and *freedom* for **discussion**
- Encouraging the child
- Not insulting the child/respecting/accepting the child

Parent as 'designer': parental influence on child's environment/social interactions

- Balanced home/family life- 'family with no problems', 'home as a refuge', 'home climate atmosphere'
- People around them- friends, other children at school, teachers
- Child's 'surroundings'- mostly in reference to living in the countryside, 'close to nature' as opposed to living in 'housing projects' (parents from the school which is located in fairly rural surroundings)
- Extra-curricular activities (sports, other activities)

Parental expectations

- To give them responsibilities/help them become responsible [two types of giving responsibilities, 1 where the parents guide and one where the child is 'on his own' so to speak]
- Teaching the child 'respect' (acting with respect toward others)
- Helping them to be open towards others and willing to make new acquaintances ('aller vers les autres')

Appendix 35 : Parent authorisation form, Ecole des Vergers

Chers parents,

Madame Laetitia Mary, professeure préparant une thèse sur l'estime de soi viendra observer, avec l'accord de Monsieur l'Inspecteur de l'éducation nationale de Wintzenheim, régulièrement notre classe. Afin de réaliser la partie pratique de sa thèse, elle sera amenée à observer plus particulièrement six élèves de la classe lors de leur travail en classe. (Elle n'intervient en aucune façon). Elle mènera deux entretiens avec ces élèves (sur leur manière de travailler) au début et à la fin de l'année ainsi qu'un entretien avec les parents de ces élèves. Le but de son travail de recherche est de montrer comment l'estime de soi influence les apprentissages. Ce travail ne perturbera en aucun cas le bon fonctionnement de la classe. Si vous avez une objection à ce que votre enfant participe (éventuellement, s'il est choisi) à ce travail, merci de me le signaler.

Signature

- Je suis d'accord.
- Je ne suis pas d'accord.

Appendix 36: Parent authorisation Ecole du Centre

(record of parent-teacher meeting kept in children's correspondence notebooks). Parent authorisation specified in N° 8, p.2.

COMPTE RENDU DE LA REUNION DU 3 SEPTEMBRE 2007 **AVEC LES PARENTS D'ELEVES DE LA CLASSE DE CM2**



1. Temps partiel

A la suite de la naissance de mon deuxième petit garçon, j'ai choisi de prendre un **temps partiel**. Mme P. vient donc tous les lundis. Elle fera la **géométrie, la conjugaison, de la littérature, des sciences, du sport ou de l'art plastique**. Nous nous rencontrons fréquemment pour **faire le point** et nous avons un **cahier de liaison** avec les sujets que nous traitons. Il y a donc une **réelle cohérence pédagogique**. Cette organisation ne semble pas poser de problème aux enfants qui sont à l'aise avec les deux enseignantes. De plus, la présence de deux professeurs les habitue **aux changements d'enseignants au collège**.

2. La classe

La classe se compose de 17 CM2 : 10 garçons et 7 filles. Il y a une **excellente ambiance dans la classe**. Les enfants sont sérieux, respectueux et solidaires. Ils ont tous envie de bien faire et sont très responsables. Le niveau est très bon. Cet effectif peu élevé facilite le travail de soutien pour les élèves qui rencontrent des petites difficultés.

3. Tour de classe

J'explique aux parents les différents aménagements de la classe :

⇒ **Tableau des responsabilités** : au sein de la classe, **les enfants remplissent diverses responsabilités** plus ou moins importantes en fonction de leur attitude en classe et de leur sérieux pour leur travail. **Un conseil de classe** a lieu toutes les deux semaines. Il est présidé par le **responsable de classe et par le secrétaire**. On y traite **des problèmes** signalés par les enfants grâce à une **boîte aux lettres** dans laquelle chacun peut déposer un **message**. Un conseil de classe peut avoir lieu à n'importe quel moment s'il y a un sujet urgent à traiter.

⇒ **Les règles de vie de la classe** : **les enfants ont élaboré cette charte ensemble**. Nous avons distingué **les droits** et **les devoirs** de chacun en mettant en relief le fait que les devoirs, s'ils sont respectés, donnent accès à des droits. Les enfants ont réfléchi aux sanctions qu'ils risquaient s'ils ne respectaient pas ces règles.

⇒ **Atelier d'écriture** : sur les panneaux d'affichage se trouvent **des affiches avec des textes écrits par les enfants** pendant les ateliers d'écriture. Ils ont lieu au moins une fois par semaine et permettent aux enfants de produire des textes courts à partir d'une consigne simple, d'un poème, d'un texte drôle... Nous réalisons ensuite une affiche sur laquelle sont collés les textes des enfants, puis nous collons celle-ci pour qu'elle soit lue par l'ensemble des élèves. Cette activité permet de stimuler l'imaginaire des enfants et les oblige à monopoliser et approfondir leurs connaissances de la langue française.

⇒ L'écoute musicale : chaque semaine, je propose aux enfants d'écouter un titre. Je choisis des artistes très divers afin que les élèves connaissent de **nombreux styles de musique**. A l'issue de certaines écoutes, un groupe fait une **affiche** sur l'artiste.

⇒ Coin détente & La bibliothèque de classe : quand les enfants ont fini leur travail et qu'ils ont fini les exercices bonus, ils peuvent aller dans le coin détente pour prendre **un livre ou un jeu**. Ils peuvent aussi aller **aider les camarades** qui les sollicitent. Chaque semaine, ils ont **un travail individuel** à rendre (petite lecture de texte, exercices de math, feuille de vocabulaire...). Chaque enfant possède un cahier des rêves dans lequel il peut dessiner et écrire ce qu'il veut. Il peut le donner à ses camarades afin qu'ils y écrivent un petit mot ou un poème. La maîtresse n'a pas le droit de le lire.

⇒ Le rétroprojecteur : Nous utilisons souvent le rétroprojecteur qui s'avère très pratique pour remplir les cartes, les schémas ou pour présenter un travail réalisé par les élèves.

⇒ La salle jaune : nous allons souvent dans cette salle pour **les moments communs** (lecture d'histoire, quoi de neuf). Les groupes y préparent les **exposés**, y réalisent les **affiches** et préparent **les conseils de classe**.

⇒ Les animaux : nous possédons **une souris et 4 poissons**. Ce sont les élèves qui s'en occupent et qui en sont responsables.

⇒ Le tour du Monde : en fonction des notes reçues (soin, comportements, exercices), les enfants se déplacent d'un nombre de cases donné et parcourent le Monde. Lorsqu'ils ont fini un parcours, ils reçoivent un petit lot. L'objectif de **cette activité est double** : d'une part, **elle motive les élèves**, d'autre part, elle permet aux enfants d'**apprendre à situer les principaux pays du Monde**.

4. Une journée type

Je fais passer aux parents la **feuille de mon cahier journal** correspondant à une journée passée. Ils disposent également de **l'emploi du temps** de la semaine. **Le matin est le plus souvent consacré à la littérature**, à l'étude de la langue (grammaire, orthographe, conjugaison, vocabulaire, à l'allemand, à la production d'écrit et aux mathématiques. L'après-midi, nous étudions l'histoire, la géographie, les sciences, les arts plastiques et nous faisons du sport.

La journée est rythmée par **des activités de rupture** permettant aux enfants de faire une pause afin de pouvoir vite se reconcentrer sur l'activité suivante. Ces activités peuvent être l'étude d'une citation, la lecture d'une histoire, d'une blague, d'une devinette, la réalisation d'un pliage...

Différents intervenants enseignent dans la classe : **Mme G. en allemand, Mme A.L en informatique et Mme B. en religion**.

5. Devoirs

Je demande aux parents présents si les devoirs donnés sont trop nombreux. Aucun parent ne pense qu'il y en a trop. De toute façon, **il est nécessaire que les enfants apprennent leurs leçons**. Je donne quelques **petits exercices**

d'application des leçons à apprendre. Ils permettent aux élèves de **s'entraîner** et aux parents **d'évaluer le niveau de leur enfant et de savoir ce que nous sommes en train d'étudier**. Comme je l'ai déjà dit aux enfants, il se peut qu'ils n'aient pas eu le temps de les faire. Ça peut évidemment arriver à tout le monde. Sachez qu'il n'y aura **aucune sanction pour des devoirs non faits si je vois que les enfants sont sincères. Je fais confiance en la bonne foi de mes élèves**, ça contribue aussi à les responsabiliser. Il faut qu'ils comprennent que les devoirs sont donnés pour eux et qu'ils doivent les faire car ils sont utiles et non parce qu'ils sont obligatoires.

6. L'évaluation

⇒ **Le bulletin** : Il reprend les principales compétences qui doivent être acquises à la fin du cycle 3. Sur chaque évaluation, **vous trouverez la ou les compétences évaluées avec la lettre et l'appréciation**. Sachez que nous devons obligatoirement remplir le bulletin avec des lettres et non des notes mais je passe toujours par une notation chiffrée pour mettre la lettre.

⇒ **La fiche bilan** : toutes les **deux semaines**, vous trouverez dans le cahier du jour cette fiche qui vous tiendra au courant du comportement **de votre enfant envers ses camarades et moi, de sa participation en classe et de son sérieux**. L'enfant y inscrit la note qu'il pense obtenir et j'y mets la mienne. Cette fiche est signée par l'enfant, par vous et moi. L'élaboration de cette fiche me prend beaucoup de temps mais je pense **qu'elle est intéressante pour vous et utile pour les enfants**.

⇒ **Travail en groupe** : de nombreux exercices sont faits **par deux ou en groupe** afin d'habituer les enfants à travailler avec leurs camarades. Contrairement à ce que l'on pourrait croire, **cet apprentissage est difficile mais très intéressant et formateur**.

⇒ **Le cahier du jour** : il est **rapporté certaines semaines pour que vous puissiez le voir**. Il se pourrait que les exercices faits le jour même ne soient pas entièrement corrigés. Ne vous en étonnez pas car je ne peux pas toujours corriger ceux-ci lorsque les élèves sont dans la classe. Je n'ai pas suffisamment de temps. Cette année, **certaines exercices sont notés sur 10** afin que les enfants soient encore plus motivés et puissent juger de leurs progrès.

7. La sixième

Les enfants de l'Ecole du Centre dépendent **du collège de S**. Cet établissement propose **une section bilangue** (ex trilingue). Les enfants apprennent dès la sixième **l'anglais et l'allemand**. Cette section nécessite de la part des enfants une grande implication. En effet, **leurs devoirs sont beaucoup plus importants**. C'est pourquoi elle n'est réservée qu'aux enfants qui ont des **très bonnes notes** et qui font preuve **d'une grande autonomie**. Prenez rendez-vous si vous souhaitez connaître mon avis. L'admission en section bilingue est sur dossier avec un système de notation sur les principales matières notamment l'allemand avec les appréciations de Madame G. et moi-même.

8. Activités et sorties prévues

En collaboration avec Laetitia Mary, professeur à l'IUFM de Strasbourg, la classe participe à un projet sur l'estime de soi. En fait, par l'intermédiaire de jeux coopératifs, les enfants prennent confiance en eux. Laetitia Mary vient donc une demi-journée par semaine observer les élèves afin de mesurer l'impact des jeux sur l'estime que les enfants ont d'eux-mêmes. Elle sélectionnera 6 enfants dont elle s'occupera plus. Elle prendra sûrement contact avec vous pour vous parler de ce projet.

Cette année, les enfants bénéficieront de **8 séances de danse dispensées par Monsieur C.** Cette intervenante, que nous connaissons bien, propose des cours très appréciés par les enfants à un âge où leur corps change et où ils ne sont pas toujours à l'aise.

Concernant les sorties, je suis actuellement en train de **monter un projet de classe de mer avec la classe de Monsieur M.**

Comme chaque année, se dérouleront **des portes ouvertes** dans ma classe. Vous pourrez venir assister à **deux heures de cours** afin de voir comment se déroulent deux séances de classe. J'ai fait passer également une feuille sur laquelle les parents peuvent s'inscrire s'ils ont envie **d'intervenir dans la classe pour parler aux enfants d'un sujet qu'ils connaissent.** Ces interventions contribueront à ce que **élèves acquièrent une culture riche et variée.**

Nous fêterons également la semaine du goût, la Saint Nicolas, le marché de Noël, le Carnaval....

9. Ma pédagogie

Je sais être **bienveillante** mais je suis aussi **ferme** quand il faut l'être. J'aime travailler **dans la bonne humeur** mais j'exige le **silence** pendant les activités qui demandent une grande concentration. **Je valorise beaucoup les enfants et les encourage afin qu'ils soient à l'aise dans la classe.** C'est une des clefs de leur réussite. J'essaie également de **responsabiliser** les enfants quant à leur travail et à leur comportement plutôt que de sanctionner même si quelquefois la sanction ne peut être évitée.

Je n'utilise pas beaucoup les manuels de l'école, **je préfère faire moi-même mes leçons et mes exercices** afin qu'ils soient vraiment adaptés aux élèves. Souvent, je pars du texte étudié en littérature pour faire mes leçons d'observation réfléchie de la langue. En ce qui concerne l'histoire, la géographie et les sciences, **j'utilise des documents variés** : extraits de livres, reproduction de tableaux, articles de journaux, émission de télévision... afin que les enfants rencontrent le maximum de types d'écrits et de supports.

Je m'investis beaucoup pour ma classe afin de proposer des activités qui intéressent les élèves et qui les motivent. **Je mets également tout en œuvre pour que mes élèves aient envie de venir à l'école.**

10. Relation avec les parents

Maman moi-même, sachez que je comprends **vos préoccupations et vos interrogations** qui sont légitimes. Nous voulons ce qu'il y a de mieux pour nos enfants et mettons tout en œuvre pour qu'ils soient bien et pour qu'ils réussissent. Aussi, n'hésitez pas à me faire part de vos questions, j'y répondrai avec plaisir. Vous pouvez m'appeler à l'école (numéro de téléphone), sur mon portable (**numéro de téléphone**) ou encore m'envoyer un mail (**adresse email**). Vous pouvez également prendre **rendez-vous** par l'intermédiaire d'un mot dans le cahier de liaison. Je préfère le savoir à l'avance car rencontrer les parents pendant le temps de l'accueil est toujours délicat lorsque je dois en même temps surveiller les enfants dans la cour.

Les portes de l'école vous sont ouvertes et j'espère que la confiance qui s'établira entre nous sera mutuelle.

Madame Malavoy

Appendix 37 : Classroom responsibilities, Ecole des Vergers

TITLE	RESPONSIBILITY	BELT	NUMBER
LIBRARIAN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tidies the classroom library section Records books checked out and returned 	orange	2
NOTEBOOKS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivers notebooks corrected by teacher 	yellow	2
COMPARTMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Verifies the children's work compartments Helps other children tidy their compartments 	yellow	1
HEAD OF LINE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asks children to line up Leads the line of children 	yellow	2
CLASS CLEANER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Passes around the dustbin Throws any rubbish in the bin 	white	2
BOARD CLEANER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Erases and cleans the board 	white	2
MAILMAN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distributes any 'mail' in class 	orange	1
GARDENER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waters and takes care of class plants 	white	1
EQUIPMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fetches the playtime equipment and returns it after the break 	yellow	2
HOMEWORK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writes down what children need to do their homework assignments 	yellow	2
CHAIRS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Takes down the chairs in the morning 	white	2
DOORMAN/WOMAN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closes the school doors Opens the classroom door/welcomes visitors 	white	1
QUOI DE NEUF PRESIDENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designates who may speak during the 'quoi de neuf' 	yellow	1
CLASS COUNCIL PRESIDENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presides the class council 	green	1

Appendix 38 : Rules for behaviour belts, Ecole des Vergers

		BEHAVIOUR BELTS						
		White	Yellow	Orange	Green	Blue	Brown	Black
My work	I don't forget to put the school materials I need for doing my homework into my bag. I don't forget to ask my parents to sign my workbooks and the teacher's notes.	I use the proper workbooks and write in the proper place. I follow instructions concerning the assignment presentation rules.	I write properly and with care.	I don't forget to write down the correct answer each time I make a mistake.	When I have finished my written work : - I check the spelling. - I check capital letters and punctuation.	I know how to work alone, without disturbing my peers.	I'm able to work seriously within a group.	
My peers	I don't hit my peers either in class or in the schoolyard.	I don't insult anyone.	I don't push my peers either in the classroom, in the hall or in the schoolyard.	I don't make fun of my peers.	I take care of my own business, I don't tell on others.	I don't participate in something that seems forbidden or dangerous.	I help those who have difficulties at the same table as me.	
School rules	I stand in line as soon as the bell rings I put my hand up when I want to speak	I sit down at my desk silently. I have a job, I do it properly.	When I stay in the classroom, I remain quiet.	I respect the work rules and I know how to whisper. I remember to go to the lavatories before entering the classroom.	I stay in line, without disturbing others.	My locker is clean and tidy. My desk and the floor are clean.	I help my peers to put away their school materials as well as to keep them in good order.	
My rights	Jobs : Class cleaner, board cleaner, gardener, chairs, doorman	Jobs : workbooks, compartments, head of line, homework, equipment, president of « what's new ? »	Jobs : librarian, postman	Job : president of the class council	Job : president of choice of texts	I have the right to go and work in a room near the classroom	I have the right to go and work alone in the computer room.	

Class charter for « CE2 - CM1 »

I have the right	Therefore I must	I did not respect the rules, so I must
1 - to be respected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - respect my peers and adults : I do not hit or insult anyone. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - apologize in speech or in writing
2 - to play in the schoolyard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - respect other children's games - stand in line when the bell rings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - copy the school rules
3 - to use the lavatories during the break but only exceptionally during class time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - keep the lavatories clean - not play in the lavatories - turn off the taps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - write why I should not do what I've done.
4 - to move around the school and the classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - move around without running, pushing others, without shouting - not disturb other classes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I lose this right temporarily - I have to copy the rule
5 - to go to the reading corner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - whisper, be quiet, not disturb those who are working 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I lose the right temporarily
6 - to talk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - put my hand up when I want to speak 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I lose this right

I accept this chart and commit myself to respect it: I inform my parents about it :

Pupil's signature :

Parent's signature

Teacher's signature

Appendix 40 : Index of acronyms and abbreviations

BSS : Burnett Self-Scale

**CAFIPEMF: Certificat d'Aptitude aux Fonctions d'Instituteurs ou de Professeurs
des Ecoles Maître Formateur**

CBT: Cognitive Behavioural Therapy

HLM: Habitation à Loyer Modéré

IUFM : Institut Universitaire de Formation des Maîtres

LAWSEQ: Lawrence Self-Esteem Questionnaire

LD: Learning Disabilities

MALS: Myself as a Learner Scale

P4C: Philosophy for Children

PSCE: Personal, Social and Citizenship Education

RSE: Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale

SFBT: Solution Focussed Brief Therapy

SLCS: Self Liking/Self-Competence Scale

Q.A.E.V.S. : Questionnaire d'Auto-Evaluation de Soi

UNCRC : UN Convention of the Rights of the Child