

### justteachers guide to Every Child Matters

Every Child Matters is an overarching government approach to the wellbeing of children and young people from birth to age 19.

#### Where did Every Child Matters come from and why do I need to understand it?

The death of a child named Victoria Climbié in February 2000 led to a widespread review of the interaction of government agencies. Lord Laming produced a damning report on what had happened and how all professionals needed to co-ordinate their approach to children at risk.

It is imperative that overseas teachers understand the background, motivation and terminology of Every Child Matters when teaching in English schools. It is essential that you understand the five outcomes and how as an educator you have a responsibility to ensure that the aims are met and if required act appropriately. It is integral to education and teaching in England.

#### What is the Every Child Matters agenda?

The UK Government's vision is to create a connected system of health, family support, childcare and education services where all children get the best start possible. Through a range of measures brought in under the "Every Child Matters: Change for Children" programme, organisations providing services to children, such as schools, hospitals and the police, will be enabled to work together and share information, so that all children, especially those from vulnerable groups, have the support they need.

The agenda is about delivering the five outcomes for children and young people in the Children Act. They are:

##### 1. Outcome - Being Healthy

**Aims** - children and young people are physically, mentally, emotionally and sexually healthy, choose not to take illegal drugs and are encouraged to have healthy lifestyles.

##### 2. Outcome - Staying Safe

**Aims** - children and young people are safe from maltreatment, neglect, violence, sexual exploitation, accidental injury and death, bullying and discrimination, crime and anti-social behaviour in and out of school, have security and stability and are cared for.

##### 3. Outcome - Enjoying and Achieving

**Aims** - children and young people are ready for school, attend and enjoy school, achieve stretching national educational standards at primary and secondary school, achieve personal and social development and enjoy recreation.

##### 4. Outcome - Making a Positive Contribution

**Aims** - children and young people engage in decision-making, support their community and environment, engage in law-abiding and positive behaviour in and out of school, develop positive relationships, choose not to bully and discriminate, develop self confidence, successfully deal with significant life changes and challenges and develop enterprising behaviour.

##### 5. Outcome - Achieving Economic Well-being

**Aims** - children and young people engage in further education, employment or training on leaving school, are ready for employment, live in decent homes and sustainable communities, have access to transport and material goods, live in households free from low income.

### **That doesn't sound much like education to me?**

To many teachers it may seem that the third outcome "enjoy and achieve" is the only one that is really focused on what is traditionally thought of as education. However, schools have a much wider role in making sure that every child can take full advantage of education and schools have always done a huge amount to make sure that children are safe and healthy. The school is expected to work closely with the local health service, social services and other local agencies. The idea is that all the services will co-operate so that every child gets all the help and support they need to make good progress.

### **Does every school have to be included?**

Yes, since September 2005 every school has been inspected against the five Every Child Matters outcomes. Their Ofsted <sup>1</sup>inspection report will also look at all five areas, it's not enough just to get good test results, schools have to look after the whole child.

### **What are extended schools and how does Every Child Matters link in with it?**

Extended schools are the UK Government's vision for all schools to provide a range of services and activities outside of the traditional school day to help meet the needs of children, young people and the wider community. Extended schools offer a whole range of other services to children and young people, outside of normal school hours to ensure that the five aims of safeguarding children continue when schools were traditionally closed. The government wants every secondary school to offer activities and childcare from 0800 to 1800 every day, with breakfast clubs and a wide range of sporting and other activities after school. Schools will also be used a lot more by the community and will be open most weeks in the year to ensure that the five outcomes continue to protect and further the education and welfare of children and young people.

### **Where can I find out more?**

[Every Child Matters](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk) - [www.everychildmatters.gov.uk](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk) or [www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/safeguarding](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/safeguarding)

[Every Child Matters: Resources and Practice](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/resources-and-practice/IG00119/) - [www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/resources-and-practice/IG00119/](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/resources-and-practice/IG00119/)

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<sup>1</sup> Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills) is a government department that inspects and regulates institutions in England providing education to learners of all ages and providers of care for children and young people.