The Accounting Early for Life Long Learning (AcE) Programme

The AcE programme and its assessment scale has been developed with and for practitioners and parents. It provides rigorous evidence of outcomes for children and also supports planning for effective EYFS practice, both within the setting and the home.

The training package is divided into three parts:

**Part One: Policy, Research and Overview**
An overview of the whole process of AcE, linking the programme to recent Government initiatives and the literature and theory that underpins AcE.

**Part Two: Implementation, Action and Documentation**
A detailed, practical step by step, account of how the programme can be implemented in an early years setting.

**Part Three: Training Workbook**
A set of training materials and timetable to be used during the AcE three day training programme, which is supported by the AcE DVD Rom.

The AcE DVD-Rom disc, enclosed in this package, accompanies the written materials.

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**Minimum specification for a Windows® computer:**
- Intel Pentium 4 processor
- Microsoft Windows XP with Service Pack 2 or Windows Vista
- 512MB of RAM
- Microsoft Internet Explorer 6.0 or 7.0 or Firefox 2.0
- DVD-ROM drive
- Adobe® Acrobat® Reader® 6 or later
- Internet connection Broadband recommended
- 1024 x 768 screen resolution
- Dedicated 128mb graphics card recommended

**Minimum specification for a Macintosh® computer:**
- PowerPC® G3, G4, or G5 or Intel processor
- Mac OS X v10.4
- 512MB of RAM
- Safari 2.0
- DVD-ROM drive
- Adobe® Acrobat® Reader® 6 or later
- Internet connection Broadband recommended
- 1024 x 768 screen resolution
- Dedicated 128mb graphics card recommended

This product is not designed to run across networks. You need to be on-line to use all the features of this product.
Preface

The Accounting Early for Life Long Learning (AcE) Programme is the practical outcome of a substantive, three year research project undertaken by the Centre for Research in Early Childhood (CREC) in Birmingham. The research, completed in 2001, was funded by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation. It sought to identify how a life enhanced by what Ball (1994) called the underpinning, ‘super skills of learning’, might be encouraged by developing attitudes and dispositions in young children. Such life long learning skills would include the capacity to communicate well, exploratory drive, curiosity, emotional well being, a critical openness to new ideas, the ability to defer immediate gratification for later fuller benefits, self management and self agency, assertiveness and resilience, and persistence and precision. These underpinning factors in learning for life needed to be described (‘to give an account of’), be located and given significance (to be ‘accounted for’) and, if possible, to be measured by an observation scale (to be ‘accounted through audit’). These three ways of ‘accounting’ generated the title ‘Accounting Early for Life Long Learning’. The AcE Programme is a practical application arising from the research. It is a rigorous and systematic means of developing learning attributes in children through a focused collaboration between practitioners, parents and the children themselves.

The AcE materials were developed and funded by CREC’s sister organisation APT (Amber Publications and Training Ltd), and have been through a long trial period involving parents, their children and people who work with our youngest children in many guises including childminders, teachers, early years professionals, special education needs coordinators, out of school workers and nursery officers.

It has taken time to develop the materials with this wide range of early years practitioners in the UK’s complex range of different early childhood environments across the private, voluntary, independent and maintained sectors, across the differing auspices of education, health and social care services and across a range of settings including the home, preschool, children’s centre, nursery school, private nursery, play group, day care nursery and out of school provision.

To add greater complexity, the development stage has also coincided with a period of unprecedented UK policy initiatives in services for families and children. We are pleased that the narrative of these changes included ideas of ‘rights for children’, ‘democratic education’, ‘parental engagement’, the importance of ‘multiple perspectives’ and ‘capturing voice’, all of which are embedded in the underpinning values of AcE. An early section of these AcE Programme materials makes explicit its direct links to the Government’s new improvement strategies.

We are particularly grateful to those early years’ officers in the trial local authorities and the children, their parents and providers who have given their time so freely.

We believe the AcE Programme creates a new and innovative vehicle for equitable dialogues about children’s learning and development between children, parents and practitioners. The focus of this dialogue is the individual child’s unique path to life-long learning. We see this as a participative dialogue which is co-constructed, has distributed power and is firmly evidence based.

The team at APT, having given ten years of their professional lives to this programme, are confident that these materials can make a substantial contribution to the fulfilment of all our young children’s potential.

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1 http://www.crec.co.uk
2 http://www.esmeefairbairn.org.uk
4 http://www.amberpublications.org.uk