

GULBENKIAN FOUNDATION

PROJECT REPORT



TOMORROW'S PARENTS

DEVELOPING PARENTHOOD EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS

PHILIP HOPE & PENNY SHARLAND

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IN SCHOOLS



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About the authors

Philip Hope and Penny Sharland are consultants and researchers working in the public and not-for-profit sectors. They are members of the Framework network of consultants. Philip Hope is the author of the Children's Society publication *Education for Parenthood* that was published in 1994, and which was used as the basis for parenthood teaching during this project.

As well as delivering consultancy and training in the educational field, the authors also work in the health, housing, local government and countryside sectors.

Philip Hope has published a number of other books, including titles on performance appraisal, consultancy and youth health. Penny Sharland has written publications on adventure and survival for young people and managing reorganisation.

FOREWORD

Although education for and about parenthood was to be found in curriculum guidance issued to schools in 1990 under the aegis of both Health and Citizenship education, it has tended to suffer the same fate as other cross-curricular themes and been accorded relatively low status by schools. There have been a number of reasons for this: the tendency of teachers to attend first and foremost to the subjects that make up the basic curriculum; the absence in the guidelines governing school inspections of any significant mention of cross-curricular themes, which in itself conveys a negative message to schools; and the paucity of new teaching resources both in the field of parenthood education and related areas.

However, two further developments working in a more positive direction need to be borne in mind. The first was the publication by the Children's Society in 1994 of a pack of coherent resource materials for secondary schools entitled *Education for Parenthood*. The second development, and one which became more evident as the project progressed, is the importance that the Schools Curriculum and Assessment Authority is beginning to attach to what it terms the 'spiritual, moral, social and cultural development' of pupils, with the possibility of the whole field of Personal and Social Education in schools, incorporating parenthood education, being given a higher status. A third development might be added: the growing inclination of the main political parties to publicly endorse the value of parenthood education in schools, even if some of the rhetoric doesn't always take account of the realities of life in the classroom.

What encouraged the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, in conjunction with the Children's Society, to initiate a pilot project concerned with education for parenthood in secondary schools was the publication of *Education for Parenthood* together with a belief that the climate is changing. The resource materials afforded a real opportunity to test out this possibility as well as a clear framework within which the initiative could safely develop and progress.

We feel vindicated by the enthusiasm with which this opportunity was taken up by the participating schools and their students, and we look forward to further development in this vitally important area.

We hope that this report, by offering a straightforward account of what one project achieved in practice, will make a useful contribution to the growing debate about parenthood education in schools and encourage its wider adoption.

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June 1997

TOMORROW'S PARENTS

REPORT OF THE 1995/6 PARENTHOOD EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS PILOT PROJECT

Summary

This report is the result of an innovative project designed to implement parenthood education in a selection of secondary schools. The project was initiated by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation in collaboration with the Children's Society and took place in Greater Manchester between 1994 and 1996. It was funded principally by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation with additional support from the Esmée Fairbairn Charitable Trust, the Department of Health and the Children's Society. The report describes how five secondary schools in three Local Education Authorities (LEAs) taught a range of students about parenthood, and what impact this work has had not only on the students, but also on the teachers, the schools in general and the students' parents.

Section 1 of the report describes how the project was set up, managed and evaluated. Section 2 describes young people's views about parenthood before they undertook the course of study. Section 3 outlines the work that was done in the schools, and the lessons to be drawn from the way the parenthood curriculum was taught and managed. Section 4 describes the impact of the programme on the students and their parents. Section 5 summarises the way in which parenthood education needs to be supported in order for it to be successfully implemented elsewhere. Section 6, the final section, offers a series of conclusions and recommendations.

The key findings

The report's key finding is that the inclusion of parenthood in the curriculum of a school, particularly if it is taught alongside other personal and social issues, can have a positive influence on young people's thinking about their roles and responsibilities as future parents. The other key findings of the report are that:

- when parenthood education is delivered well in schools there is a measurable, positive impact on students' knowledge, skills and understanding of parenthood
- parenthood education is best located within Personal and Social Education (PSE), or its equivalent
- therefore the importance, status and priority attached to parenthood education will depend on the importance given to PSE, or its equivalent, within the curriculum
- key features likely to promote the successful introduction and delivery of parenthood education in schools include: 'specialist' staff with good groupwork skills and enthusiasm for the subject, adequate staff training, visible managerial support, good timetabling and physical resources, and reinforcement in other areas of the curriculum and outside the classroom
- key elements for success in the classroom include: a participative and facilitative style of teaching, flexibility in timing and pace to suit the needs of students, use of mixed and single sex groups for different activities, appropriate personal disclosure and the ability to handle personal sensitive issues
- The Children's Society's *Education for Parenthood* pack which comprised the materials used in the project, is a useful and relevant resource for the teaching of parenthood to students aged 13 to 17.

Recommendations for action

- 1 The School Curriculum and Assessment Authority (SCAA) should establish a pilot scheme to develop a comprehensive parenthood syllabus and programmes of study for 11 to 13 year-olds and 14 to 16 year-olds. The syllabus should be based upon the values of caring for children and the importance of relationships, avoid promoting a single model of family structures or cultures, and be structured around five main themes:
 - what it means to be a parent
 - what parents need
 - parent-child relationships
 - rights and responsibilities
 - health and development.
- 2 SCAA should investigate the accreditation and validation of courses of study in parenthood.
- 3 SCAA should aim to give a statutory entitlement of 20 hours parenthood education for all 11 to 16 year-old students during their period of compulsory secondary education. In addition, all sixth form students should have the opportunity for at least four hours of parenthood education.
- 4 SCAA should fully incorporate parenthood as a key subject within the PSE curriculum or its equivalent. It should seek to raise the statutory status and educational priority given to PSE, or its equivalent, within the National Curriculum.
- 5 Universities, LEAs, teacher training colleges, professional networks, and curriculum bodies and other relevant organisations should identify the contribution they can make to developing parenthood as a core component of the National Curriculum.
- 6 OFSTED inspections should include an assessment of parenthood education within the PSE curriculum.
- 7 The second edition of the *Education for Parenthood* resource pack should be updated and revised by the Children's Society to include an extended teachers' guide which brings together all the learning from the project about how to implement a programme of education for parenthood in schools.

1.1 The need for parenthood education

Historical background

Formal and informal advice about the upbringing of children has been proffered to parents and would-be parents for many years. It was in the 1970s, however, that Sir Keith Joseph, Secretary of State for Social Services gave significant support to a major initiative on parenting and in 1974 two official reports were published by the DHSS promoting the idea of preparation for parenthood in schools. These proposals were followed by other government sponsored activity such as the Court Report on Child Health (1976), the Select Committee on Violence (1977) which observed 'Much more should be done in the school curriculum to ensure that all pupils receive some education in the skills of parenthood' and a Select Committee recommendation that 'the Government should ensure that education for parenthood is available for all boys and girls of all levels of intellectual ability'.

Following this series of pronouncements, a number of practical initiatives were pursued by the Open University, the National Children's Bureau, and bodies such as the Study Commission on the Family (subsequently to become the Family Policies Study Centre). In the early 1980s the Department for Education and Science funded three investigations into preparation for parenthood in every secondary school; Cambridge University Child Care and Development Group produced a report on preparation for parenthood; and Aston University recommended a parenthood-related experience for all pupils.

This intense level of activity was followed by a quieter period in the 1980s, possibly reflecting the prevailing view in government at the time that the family was an exclusively private domain and that parents should be left to get on with the job. The emerging message was that the family's independence should be cherished and state interference discouraged.

Interest in parenthood education was revived in the early 1990s at a time of growing concern about children's behaviour. It was then that Lord Joseph (as he became) launched a new pamphlet on the subject and a major debate in the House of Lords. He sought again to ask the question: would better preparation for parenthood offer some protection against a range of social ills in the future, such as the behaviour of young men, teenage pregnancy, the long term health and welfare of children, family breakdown, behaviour in the classroom and educational attainment.

Voluntary agencies and others closely involved in delivering services to parents and their children have since then developed an array of parenting education projects and programmes including some school-based work, home-school liaison, youth work initiatives, family support schemes and family learning based in family and children resource centres. These schemes are largely voluntary, yet are well attended and show considerable 'consumer satisfaction'.

Recent initiatives

It is now recognised that young people often leave school without having thought through whether or when they will have children; that they will not have planned how to cope with being a parent – as a mother or a father; and will often not realise who they can turn to for help. Some young people become parents while at school or soon after they leave full-time education and embark upon this major change without considering the potential impact on their lives.

Recognition of this problem and young people's needs has led to a growing call for the introduction of parenthood education in the curriculum by educationalists, those working with young people in informal settings and by all the main political parties. A survey of views published by the National Children's Bureau in 1994 found '... considerable support for the view that family life education should have an official place in the core curriculum'.

In 1992 the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation supported a study by the Community Education Development Centre of young people's views about the preparation for parenthood they were receiving in the school setting. This identified some of the potential difficulties and issues in teaching parenthood, namely:

- any discussion about parenthood can raise painful and sensitive issues for many young people
- young people, particularly young men, have mixed feelings about the relevance of parenthood to them
- young people view becoming a parent as a matter of choice
- gender stereotypes are restrictive for young women and young men and need to be examined and debated.

It concluded that 'The most we can do in direct work is to give young people opportunities to see family life and parenting in a wider context, and to equip them with the skills and confidence to make decisions and choices about their own lives now and in the future'.

Thus there is evidence of growing interest in the subject of parenthood education, as well as a clear concern to ensure that initiatives in this area are sensitive to the complex and important issues it will need to address.

1.2 The parenthood education project

Purpose

The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation was keen to test out the efficacy of parenthood education in schools. The purpose of this project was to demonstrate how parenthood education could successfully be implemented in secondary schools, with a view to influencing the policies of central government and local government. There were two objectives:

- 1 To show that parenthood education in schools can enable young people to:
 - understand what being a parent might mean
 - appreciate parenthood as a major life stage
 - know the choices, responsibilities and skills that parenting involves.
- 2 To show that parenthood education can be taught effectively in schools in a variety of ways in the school curriculum, and in different settings and circumstances.

Teaching resources and materials

The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation chose to base the project upon the resource pack for teachers *Education for Parenthood*, written by Philip Hope of Framework and published by the Children's Society in 1994. This is a comprehensive resource solely focused on parenthood and specifically aimed at schools. It contains 28 classroom and community-based activities to encourage participative and experiential learning for students about parenthood. In developing the resource pack materials, the Children's Society identified the basic components of a 'parenthood curriculum' as:

- relationships
- personal skills and resources
- individual differences
- a pluralist society
- safety and security
- law and rights
- financial and budgeting skills
- health and development.

Starting point for teaching parenthood

The project, and the materials from which it drew, took the view that families come in all shapes and sizes, with different cultural, social, religious and ethnic traditions. Whatever the differences between families, it is clear that the roles of mothers and fathers are always central. Other members of the extended family may also have a significant part to play.

What is equally clear is that there is no foolproof way to be a parent, there are no easy answers and no shortcuts. There is no such thing as an 'ideal' parent or an ideal model for a family structure. The values and beliefs about parenting and families that underpinned the project were that:

- the uniqueness and potential of every child should be valued
- every child should have love and security
- parenthood is a privilege and not a right.

Key themes and issues addressed by the project included:

- the respective roles of mothers and fathers, and the frequent questioning of gender stereotypes

- the pluralism of family structures in our multi-cultural society without generalising about parenting in different cultures
- parenting is a demanding role. Someone in a stable relationship with a supportive partner is likely to derive strength from that partnership
- discipline, control and good behaviour are issues of critical importance to parents and children. Alternative means of achieving this were considered and the rights of children stressed
- the responsibilities of parents and children to one another.

A 'model' family structure?

The project underlined the importance of an approach to delivering parenthood education that specifically avoided overtly or covertly promoting one 'model' of the ideal family. An approach that promoted one model family structure was seen as flawed for a number of reasons:

- Parents, students and teachers quickly see any 'hidden' agenda in the materials or teaching methods that promote one 'ideal' family structure. They are likely to resent such manipulation, be resistant to the educational process and be more likely to reject rather than embrace the model being promoted.
- Promoting one family structure as ideal is an obstacle to processes of discussion and debate about values and principles that enable students to examine alternatives and arrive at conclusions. It prevents the key educational goal of equipping students to think for themselves.
- It is important that students' views are challenged by teachers in order to present views, arguments and alternatives that may be outside the students' experience. It is important that these challenges are undertaken in a way that encourages inquiry and learning and are rooted in the principles of valuing children, and providing them with love and security.
- Students whose own family structure differs from that of an 'ideal' will feel at best that the work they are doing on parenthood does not reflect their own situation and is therefore inappropriate or irrelevant. At worst they will feel rejected and condemned by both the teacher and the school.
- In any community where there is diversity, the advocacy of one family structure in parenthood could lead to accusations of discrimination and stereotyping from parents, students and teachers on a wide range of grounds including racism and sexism. Worse, it could encourage discrimination inside and outside the classroom towards those that do not match an 'ideal' or preferred social 'norm'.
- The diversity of successful family structures that exist today contradicts the notion that there is one model alone that always works better than any other.
- The level of dysfunction that is known to exist within all types of families suggests that factors other than the structure of the family may be the cause of family breakdown or other problems within society.

1.3 Project design and methodology

Five schools

Parenthood education was taught and evaluated during the academic year 1995/6 in five secondary schools within the metropolitan boroughs of Oldham, Rochdale and Tameside in Greater Manchester:

- Oldham North Chadderton High
- Rochdale Falinge Park High
 Cardinal Langley
- Tameside Mossley Hollins High
 Littlemoss High

Initially the schools agreed to take part in principle, subject to further detailed discussions. The schools were selected in order to provide a wide variety of settings including urban and rural, large and small in scale, racially mixed, single sex and co-educational, with and without sixth forms and one which was voluntary-aided.

This variety of schools and LEAs ensured that the project fully tested the wider application and relevance of the materials and the training. The local clustering enabled the schools and the LEAs to be linked for mutual support and joint training.

1,200 students

The target number of five schools originally was intended to ensure a large enough sample of students from which to draw conclusions. The project design was based upon each of the five schools teaching parenthood to one class of around 30 students. This would have led to a total of 150 participating students.

As it turned out, this was a significant underestimate. Some schools elected to pilot the programme with a whole year group of six classes, with each class receiving a half-term teaching block of six consecutive lessons. In practice nearly 1,200 students experienced a course of study in parenthood education. Most students received six lessons within the PSE part of their timetable. Three Year 12 students studied parenthood for the whole year. Some schools used the parenthood education materials in other curriculum subjects including English, science, humanities, drama and religious education (RE).

The work in schools

Cardinal Langley

Cardinal Langley is a co-educational voluntary-aided 11 to 18 comprehensive Catholic high school in Rochdale borough. Parenthood education was delivered at Cardinal Langley primarily through the PSE curriculum to students in Years 9 and 10 (13 to 15 year-olds). Every student in both years received a six-week parenthood scheme of work delivered by a member of staff and the headteacher. The

Scheme of work at Cardinal Langley

Thinking ahead

What it means to be a parent

Child abuse

Parents' influence on children

What it takes to be a parent

Review and evaluation

implementation of the scheme was co-ordinated by the head of PSE. Approximately 360 students experienced the course of study.

The teachers designed the scheme of work on the left. This was amended from time to time, substituting, for example, activities such as 'myths about pregnancy' where it was felt appropriate. In addition, a half-day workshop on parenthood education for Year 12 students was delivered as part of a three-day induction programme at the start of the new school year.

Scheme of work at Falinge Park

Thinking ahead

What it means to be a parent

Child abuse

Getting along together

Resources at home

Enjoying your children

Falinge Park

Falinge Park is a suburban co-educational high school with a significant proportion of Asian students situated in Rochdale borough. Falinge Park delivered their parenthood education primarily through the PSE programme in Year 10. Every year 10 students in the school received a six-week programme of lessons in a variety of schemes of work, one of which is indicated on the left.

Two members of staff were primarily involved in delivery of the schemes of work, one of whom, the head of the PSE department, coordinated the programme. Five other teachers were involved in delivering the lessons.

Approximately 200 students experienced the course of study. In addition to this delivery, other teachers used parenthood themes within the curriculum of other subjects including English and RE.

Scheme of work at Littlemoss

Thinking ahead

Overview and general discussion of the topic

What it means to be a parent

Questionnaire: What it takes to be a parent

Design a leaflet for parents and children

Influences on behaviour

Contracts for parents and young people

Littlemoss

Littlemoss is an all-boys school, on the city edge of the Tameside metropolitan borough. The school delivered parenthood education principally through Year 10 during Personal and Vocational Education (PVE) sessions. The programme was interspersed with careers and other topics, and took six weeks to deliver. The main programme is indicated on the left.

The teacher responsible for coordinating PVE in the school devised and delivered the programme together with another member of staff. Their class sizes were usually over 30 and both teachers found difficulties in the large numbers and the small classrooms. All students were boys and numbered 126 in total.

Mossley Hollins

Mossley Hollins is a small co-educational school in a rural setting on the Pennine edge of the Tameside borough. Parenthood education was delivered primarily through the personal and social development (PSD) programme to all Year 9 students. At Mossley Hollins all PSD classes throughout the school are delivered at the same time on the same day.

The schemes of work lasted six weeks and were devised and delivered by two members of staff, one of whom was head of the design and technology department and both of whom were form tutors for Year 9. They also delivered parenthood sessions to their tutor groups.

One teacher facilitated an after school club on parenthood during the first term, and taught childcare in which she included some parenthood material. The total number of students taught parenthood at Mossley Hollins was 180. The schemes of work varied throughout the year and are reproduced below.

Scheme of work 1

What it takes to be a parent
Reasons and consequences of becoming parents
Patterns of parenting
Thinking ahead
Extended family
Concluding session; evaluation

Scheme of work 2

Introduction to the course
Thinking ahead
Different types of families
What it takes to be a parent
Parents' influence on children
Rights and responsibilities

Scheme of work 3

Introductory session
The extended family
Thinking ahead
Contracts
Parenthood poster
Rights ladder

Scheme of work 4

Extended family
Patterns of parenting
Families and the benefit system
Motherhood and fatherhood
Marriage contracts
Parent action

Scheme of work at North Chatterton

Reasons and consequences of being a parent
What it means to be a parent
Child abuse
Children's rights
Motherhood and fatherhood
What it takes to be a parent

North Chadderton

North Chadderton is a large urban co-educational high school in the borough of Oldham with a sixth form. Parenthood education was delivered at North Chadderton to all Year 12 students as part of PSE. One member of staff designed the six-week scheme of work shown on the left and led a team of five teachers in delivering the course to six small groups of 18 Year 12 students.

Parenthood education was also delivered by another member of staff as an option to a small group of Year 12 students on one afternoon each week throughout the year. This focused substantially on community-based activities.

Planning, training and support

The school staff most directly involved in delivering the lessons – the core group – were given in-service training and support, as well as teaching materials by two experienced trainers and consultants from the Framework group of consultants – Philip Hope and Penny Sharland (see Appendix 6), the authors of this report.

The training aimed to enable the teachers to develop and deliver the materials in a way which met the particular needs of their students in the context of their own schools and local communities.

The teachers met once a term as a group with the two consultants, familiarising themselves with the resource pack materials, developing schemes of work, discussing dilemmas and ways of overcoming problems, and exploring how to use their classroom skills to teach the topic of parenthood. The teachers used this time to try out the materials on one another, experiencing the activities and their impact before using them with the students. The teachers found the sessions valuable and enjoyable. One commented, 'It was extremely useful to be trained using the actual materials that we will use in the classroom' and 'It's important to understand our own reactions to the materials if we want to appreciate the reactions of the students'.

The training days were also used to devise and discuss a variety of approaches for delivering the parenthood curriculum. It was important for each school to choose a method and format which best met their circumstances. A number of options were explored in the early stages including:

- a topic within PSE or social studies
- a topic within a single subject such as English or history
- a cross-curricular theme that appeared across a range of subjects.

Within these options a number of timescales were possible. It was intended that the schools would run the programme over three terms to ensure sufficient time and implementation for effective evaluation. However, in some cases, where there was less time available on the curriculum, the programme was run for only one or two terms.

Different schools selected different activities and topics from the parenthood resource pack themes – some chose particular areas while others sought to cover the whole range. One group focused on community activities. The core group of teachers then produced a scheme of work tailored to the needs of each of their schools.

The consultants visited each school at least once each term to give advice, help resolve problems, gather feedback through observation and interviews with students, staff and headteachers, and to collect written materials.

Evaluation

Evaluation was a key and integral element of the project and was undertaken internally by the project consultants, Philip Hope and Penny Sharland of Framework. The process and the outcome of the work were evaluated as the project progressed. The findings were used to amend and improve the project as it was being implemented in consultation with the project's management committee and the core group of teaching staff. This report represents the final evaluation of the project and includes conclusions and recommendations for the future.

The evaluation focused on four main areas:

- 1 The impact of the programme on students and their parents.
- 2 The impact of the programme on teachers and the school as a whole.
- 3 The relevance and practicality of the parenthood education activities and schemes of work.
- 4 The usefulness of the planning, training and support provided to the teachers.

An evaluation of the impact of the project upon parents was included because:

- parents, as well as students, are 'customers' of schools and their views on teaching parenthood may influence its wider acceptance and implementation in the future
- conflicts between parents and the school about the content or the process of what was taught might have been important to record and overcome
- the students' work, in some cases, involved talking to their parents about parenthood, and the impact of this on their relationship was an important part of the learning that took place.

While not 'external', the evaluation was wide ranging, and relied upon the responses of uncommitted colleagues involved in the project. It is therefore felt to be sufficiently robust to support the conclusions drawn from the project as a whole.

Box 1.1 summarises the different methods used to collect and record data on the impact and value of the project for each area. Appendix 1 describes in more detail the specific areas assessed with examples of each of the written evaluation instruments. The training and support provided by the external consultants was also evaluated.

BOX 1.1

Summary of the project evaluation methods

Methods	Focus					
	Students	Parents	Teachers	Schools	The pack	Support
Questionnaires	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Materials and work produced in school	✓				✓	
Interviews	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Self-assessment	✓		✓		✓	✓
Observation	✓			✓	✓	✓
Case study	✓	✓			✓	
On-site written records, plans and policies			✓	✓	✓	
Recording sheets			✓	✓	✓	✓
Off-site materials			✓		✓	
Meetings		✓		✓	✓	✓

The management committee

A management committee was formed to oversee the direction of the project. The members of the committee are listed in Appendix 6.

Dissemination

The means by which the project's work was disseminated included:

- articles in a wide range of local and national journals and newspapers while the project was in progress
- features on local and national radio and television
- three seminars involving students and teachers organised by the participating LEAs
- presentations to relevant organisations at national conferences and seminars
- meetings with government ministers and key agencies such as the SCAA and the Department of Health.

SECTION 2 STUDENT VIEWS ABOUT PARENTHOOD

Introduction

Where possible, students were asked to complete a questionnaire about their views on parenthood before undertaking their course of study, and to complete the same questionnaire afterwards in order to assess the impact of the parenthood classes on the students. About half of the 1,200 students completed the pre-course questionnaire.

This section describes the students' views as presented in the pre-course questionnaire and gives an insight into the attitudes and expectations of young people about parenthood. Attention is drawn to statistically significant variations between different categories of student. These are described as being either 'significant' or 'very significant' variations.

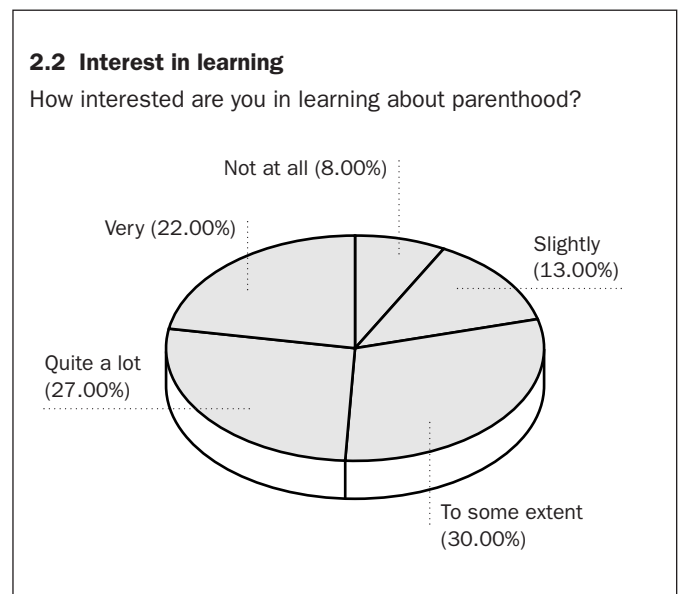
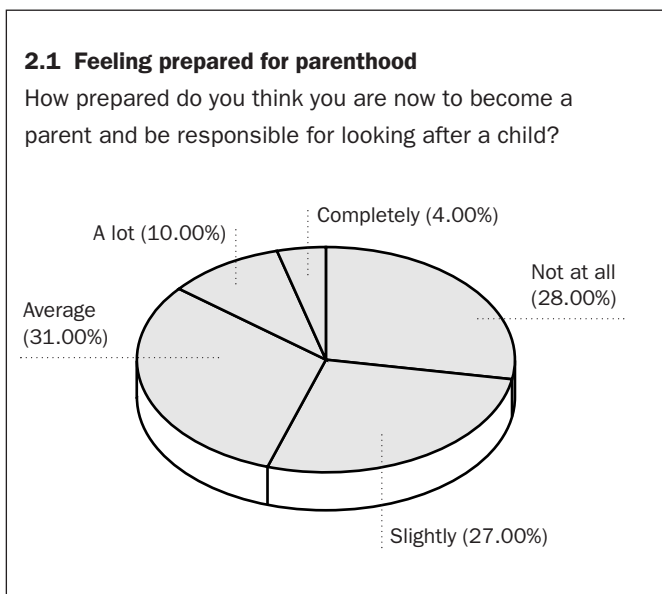
Section 4 places the results of the first survey alongside the results of the second. Appendix 2 summarises the results of both the 'before' and 'after' questionnaires.

The student population

The 536 students completing the first questionnaire survey comprised an equal number of females and males. Nearly two-thirds were aged 14 or 15. The vast majority had a brother or sister in their family, 8% were living with a step-parent and 23% were in a lone parent family. 15% identified themselves as Asian in origin, while the rest identified themselves as white (82%) or other (3%).

Feeling prepared for and interested in learning about parenthood

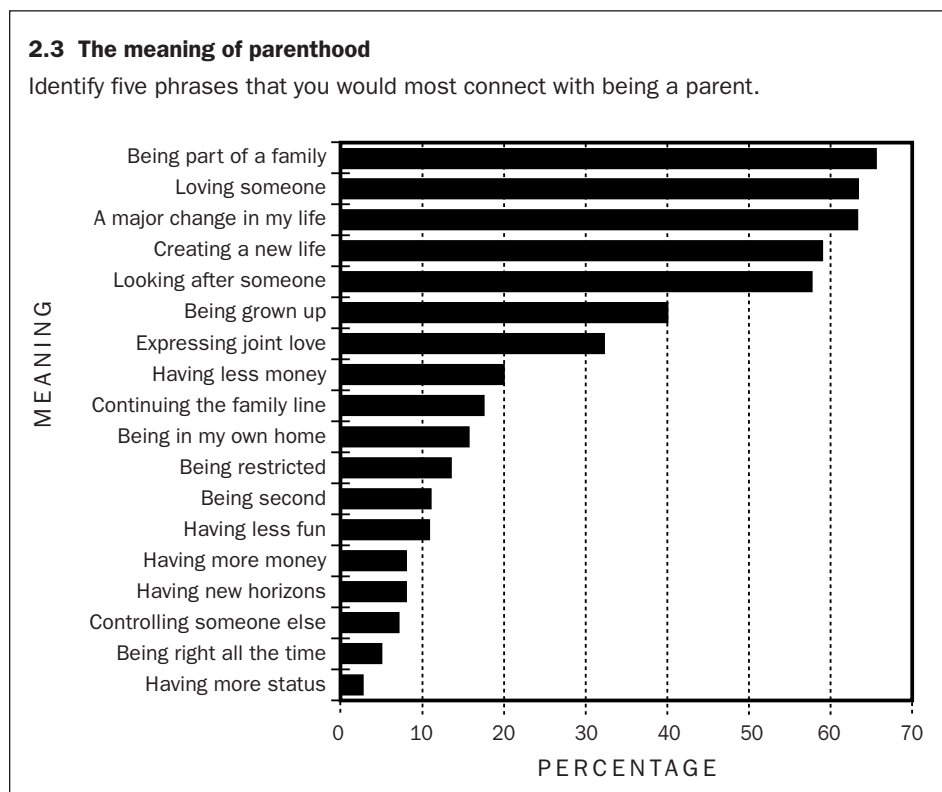
Charts 2.1 and 2.2 show that students in general feel unprepared for parenthood but are positively interested in learning about it. Male students significantly are less interested in learning about parenthood than their female counterparts.



The meaning of parenthood

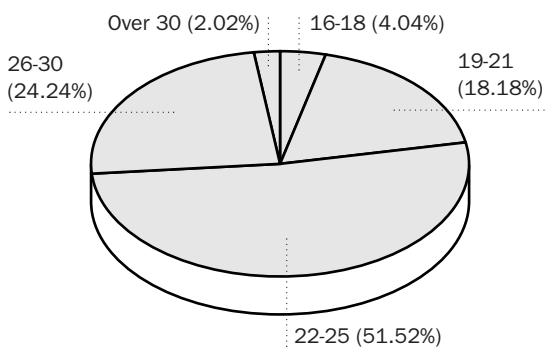
Chart 2.3 shows that students in general view being a parent as being part of a family, loving someone, being involved in a major life change, creating a new life and looking after someone. Students in general do not view parenthood as meaning having more status, being right all the time, controlling someone, opening new horizons or having more money.

Very significantly, more male than female students view parenting as meaning 'being grown up' or 'continuing the family line'. Significantly more female than male students view parenting as meaning 'loving someone' or 'being second'.



2.4 Age on becoming a parent

How old do you think you will be when you become a parent for the first time?

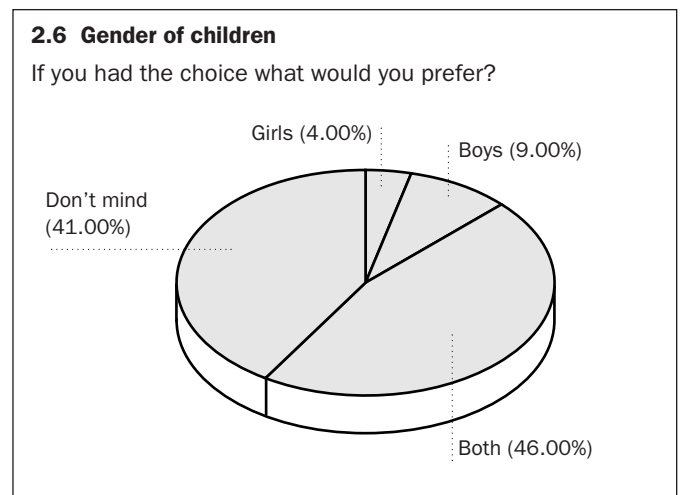
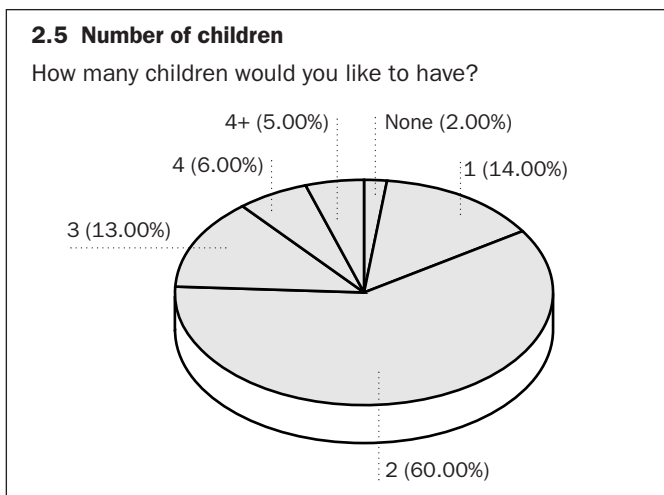


Expectations of parenthood

Chart 2.4 shows that most students think they will first become a parent when they are 22 to 25 years old. There is no significant difference in this point of view among different categories of students.

Chart 2.5 shows that the great majority of students would like to have two children. Few students think they want none. Female students want to have bigger families than male students. Asian students want larger families than white students.

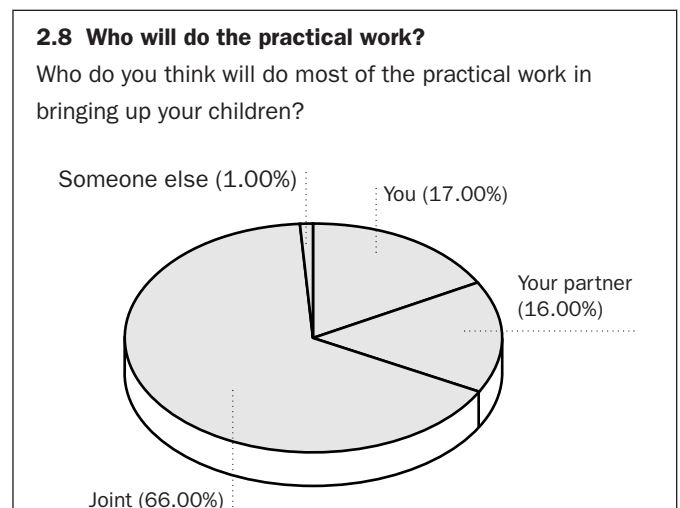
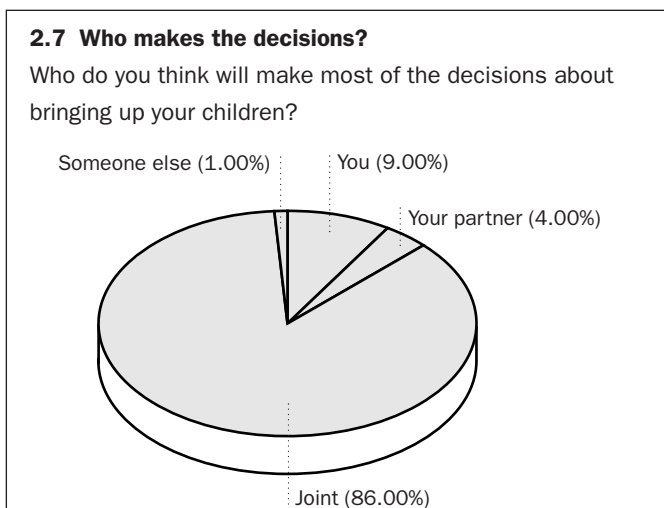
Chart 2.6 shows that nearly half of the students want a mix of boys and girls and a large proportion don't mind. Of those who want a child of one sex only, more want a boy than want a girl. Very significantly more of those who want a boy only are male students.

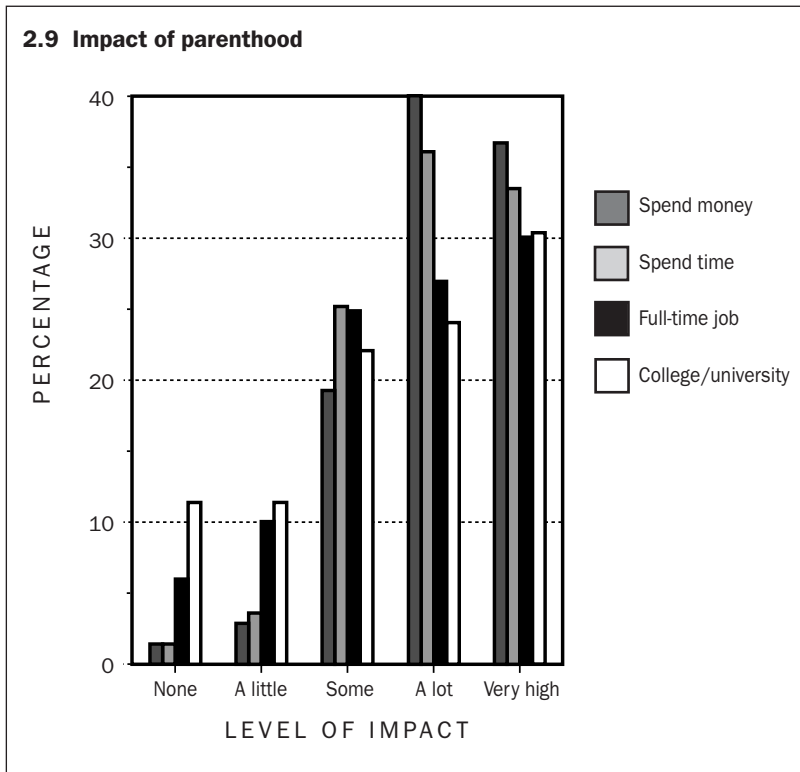


Responsibility for decision making and practical work

Chart 2.7 shows that the great majority of students think that decisions about parenting will be made jointly by them and their partners. Of the very few who think it will be them alone, a significant number were female. Of the very few who think it will be their partner, a significant number are male.

Chart 2.8 shows that the majority of students think that the practical work involved in parenting will be done jointly. Of those who think the practical work will be done by them alone, a very significant number are female. Of those who think practical work will be done by their partner, a very significant number are male.



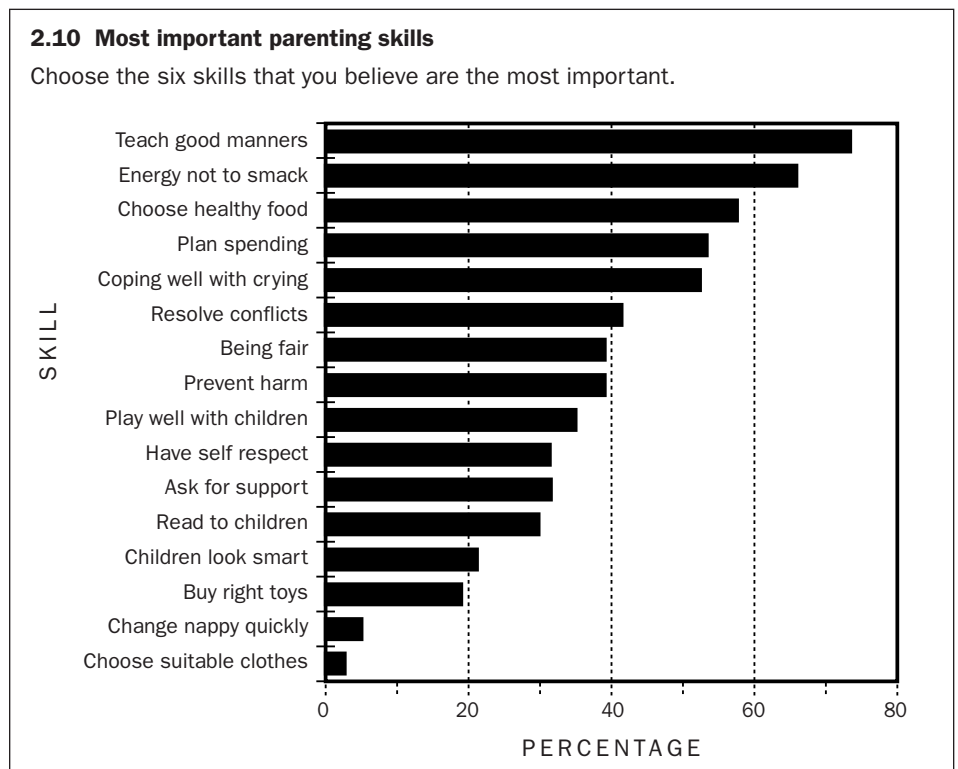


The impact of becoming a parent

Chart 2.9 shows that most students think becoming a parent will have substantial impact upon how they spend their time, how they spend their money, having a full-time job and going to college or university. Significantly more female students than male think it will have a high impact on how they spend their time and on going to college or university.

The most important parenting skills

Chart 2.10 shows that over half the students identify the most important parenting skills (from a list of 16) as teaching your child good manners, having the energy to deal with bad behaviour without smacking, choosing healthy food to eat, planning spending when faced with the extra costs of having a baby and coping well with a baby that cries for a long period of time. Few students identify choosing baby clothes that are easy to wash or changing a nappy quickly as important parenting skills.



Of those who identify asking for support when it is hard to cope and being able to negotiate and resolve conflicts with children as important, a significant number are female. Of those who identify making sure your child looks smart and attractive as important, a significant number are male. A significant number of Asian students identify as important having respect for yourself and others, teaching good manners, making sure your child looks smart and attractive and buying the right toys to suit the age of your children.

Summary

Young people generally do not feel prepared for parenthood yet have an interest in learning more about it. The majority of young people associate parenthood with being part of a family, loving someone, experiencing a major life change, creating a new life and looking after someone.

Most young people expect to become a parent in their early twenties and want to have two children. The great majority think that their decisions about parenting will be made jointly and the majority think both parents will do the practical work. Most appreciate that becoming a parent will have substantial impact upon how they spend their time, their money, having a full-time job and going to college or university.

Most students have a well-developed understanding of the skills that parents need. There are, however, some significant differences between boys and girls with regard to an interest in learning about parenthood, the meaning of parenthood, expectations of being a parent and parenting roles and responsibilities. The project sought to encourage students to explore and build upon these attitudes and expectations.

SECTION 3 DELIVERING PARENTHOOD EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS

3.1 Introducing parenthood education into the pilot schools

Introducing parenthood education into the five pilot schools had different effects upon individual teachers and each of the schools. This impact started during the initial discussions about taking part in the project, carried on throughout the life of the project and continues with varying decisions being made by the schools on whether and how to carry on delivering parenthood education as part of their curriculum now the project has been completed.

BOX 3.1

School selection criteria

The school should:

- be in one of the three LEAs, with at least one from each
- together cover the following categories: large/small, urban/rural, racially mixed, single sex, voluntary-aided, with a sixth form
- the headteacher must be fully conversant with the project's aims and requirements
- have two teachers prepared to take responsibility for the delivery and management of the project at the school, undertake the training and complete the evaluation.

Choosing to take part

The list of criteria for selecting schools in Box 3.1 was drawn up to ensure that an appropriate mix of students and schools took part in the project.

Nine schools were originally identified and approached. Some schools declined to take part or showed little enthusiasm for the idea after the first contact had been made. They appeared to be reluctant for a number of reasons including:

- inability to grasp the aims of the project
- already overstretched in terms of time and resources
- no senior member of staff prepared to make a firm decision
- lack of sympathy with the project
- suspicious of being sold 'a product'.

Motivation

The mix of the five schools chosen met the selection criteria. The initial decision by each school to take part in the project itself indicated enthusiasm for the idea of parenthood education. However, different levels of motivation among the staff directly involved, the varying degrees of support from their colleagues and line managers, and the different levels of commitment of the headteachers all had a direct impact upon the implementation of the programme, and the overall success of the work. While all five schools were prepared to take part there were clearly differences in the initial levels of enthusiasm as shown in Box 3.2 opposite.

BOX 3.2**Levels of motivation for introducing parenthood education**

- In some schools the headteachers were very enthusiastic – in one case the headteacher elected to teach the course himself. Another headteacher attended every meeting of the project, showing enthusiasm and demonstrating support throughout. In other schools the staff found that despite showing a willingness to go ahead, they had little support in practice from senior staff. In one case one of the teachers who had been directly involved in the initial training was moved out of teaching parenthood into other subjects on the timetable, and only after an intervention by the management committee did the timetabling alter to accommodate her.
- In some schools the staff directly involved in the project were keen but encountered differing reactions from their colleagues within the school. Some of the other staff became keen to get involved and approached the core group of teachers with requests for materials and support. Other staff showed tolerance of the involvement of the core group and if asked were happy to deliver what was asked of them. However, in a few cases the teachers in the core group encountered considerable resistance and hostility among staff in their school to the parenthood work.
- The level of enthusiasm among the staff directly involved in the core group was high but varied. However, the enthusiasm of all these teachers increased significantly as the work progressed and students began to react favourably to the content and the methods used.

Planning and preparation

The final decision on which five schools would take part was arrived at during the spring term of 1995. This gave sufficient time for the consultants and teachers during the summer term of that year to:

- plan how parenthood education would be introduced into the timetable during the 1995/6 school year.
- provide initial training and advice to the teachers directly involved who would begin face-to-face delivery in the autumn term.
- prepare schemes of work and lesson plans.

The summer term was thus a crucial period. Key decisions were made by the schools about where parenthood education would fit in the school curriculum, how many students would take part, how many lessons they would be given and which teachers would deliver them. Broadly, the main approach adopted was to incorporate parenthood within the PSE part of the timetable. Some schools give this other titles such as PVE and PSD but they represent broadly similar areas of work.

There was some flexibility in the school timetables to allow for the development of different approaches during the summer term. This flexibility worked both

ways, however, with some initial suggestions for introducing parenthood into the curriculum being dropped as other curriculum pressures and priorities prevailed.

Efforts to introduce parenthood into the curriculum of the five schools in more radical or fundamental ways were not possible within the timescale of the project. To influence the overall shape of the timetable and the detailed curriculum in the schools – in effect their basic culture – would have required a much longer period of discussion, negotiation, trialing and development. Nor would such an approach have been welcomed in all the schools. For some, only a national directive that parenthood must be taught as a mandatory part of the curriculum would have prompted change.

BOX 3.3

Approaches to introducing parenthood into the pilot schools – key factors

- a general view among the teachers that parenthood education was first and foremost a component of PSE
- a desire among teachers to see parenthood education as a subject to be delivered to all students in a year group
- the project's objective of assessing the impact of the materials on Year 12 students (16/17 year-olds)
- the lack of time to develop a cross-curricular approach that involved staff from different subject disciplines
- the level of enthusiasm for new ideas from headteachers and teachers delivering PSE classes.

The main factors affecting decisions about how parenthood education was introduced into the curricula of the five pilot schools are given in Box 3.3.

Methods for monitoring the impact of the project on the teachers and the schools included:

- regular meetings with teachers and headteachers before the project began and while it was taking place
- feedback from teachers during the termly training and support sessions
- observation and discussion with teachers during visits to the schools
- written records produced by teachers in tailor-made lesson logbooks
- schemes of work produced by the teachers.

3.2 Locating parenthood education in the school curriculum

Locating parenthood within PSE

During the planning and preparation phase of the project, attention was drawn to how parenthood could be introduced into the school curriculum in different ways. However, the teachers from each school opted to begin by planning schemes of work to fit within the PSE part of their curriculum. This location of parenthood as a topic within PSE remained substantially the case throughout the project.

The extent to which parenthood became an established part of the PSE curriculum varied from school to school, and was noticeably embedded to a greater extent where the school's PSE policy had been in place for some time. In one school parenthood became part of the written policy quickly, whereas in a school which had only begun to establish PSE the previous year, parenthood was approached more tentatively. Despite these differences all five schools plan to continue to deliver parenthood within their PSE curriculum now that the project has concluded.

The other main factor affecting the location of parenthood in the curriculum was the relative value given to PSE in general. Where PSE was seen as having value in its own right as part of the school's obligation for the broader development of students, then parenthood also fared better. In some schools, the work undertaken by students in looking at themselves, their relationships and their wider social development was seen as having a direct and positive impact on students' academic success. (This view has been supported by a senior OFSTED officer who reported to one headteacher that a key reason why voluntary-aided schools generally outperform other schools in examination results is because of the inclusion of PSE in their curriculum.)

For those schools that valued PSE less, parenthood was seen as a topic for use with different groups of students depending upon the personal enthusiasm of the staff. Any more substantive development than this did not happen because in some schools there was no National Curriculum requirement that PSE be given priority. One school in this category was described by the headteacher as 'a comprehensive with an academic bias'.

Box 3.4

The value of PSE in the school curriculum

Views about the value of PSE differed considerably between schools as these comments by three headteachers illustrate:

- 'The National Curriculum does not have a statutory place for topics that are broadly to do with personal and social education. I could not take time currently given to other subjects as they would suffer and PSE is not a subject that has value in parents' minds ... If PSE was in the National Curriculum we would have to consider an extension to the school day to fit it in.'
- 'We have a whole school code of conduct about relationships. PSE has been a feature of our curriculum for a long time. It has been built up over the years and now has high status with a quality team and a well organised modular structure for delivering it ... the national comparisons by OFSTED appear to show that schools that deliver PSE outperform those who don't. It may look like you're taking time away from academic study but the work on PSE helps build the quality of relationships in the school, relationships between students and relationships between students and teachers. That is why we work on issues such as bullying, anti-racism and now parenting.'
- 'I see PSE as being about personal effectiveness – within the school, in the local community, with your family, with friends. PSE is more than another subject – it is the place where learning to be effective can occur. In PSE young people acquire a 'power tool' for learning. Students will learn about themselves, how they learn, and why they learn. It is crucial to the rest of their studies – academic and non-academic.'

The project has shown that parenthood education can be successfully introduced into the school curriculum through PSE. The success and status of parenthood education however, is directly linked to the support and status given to PSE. Yet views on the value of PSE differ markedly between the headteachers of the schools as shown in Box 3.4.

Locating parenthood within RE

One school included parenthood education in religious education lessons through directly relevant activities such as those on religious and cultural rituals on welcoming new-born children into the world, and different contracts, including marriage, between parents in different religions and cultures. Although this was successful, problems resulting from locating parenthood education solely within RE were:

- the amount of time given to parenthood within RE was and is likely to be limited given the scale of the remainder of the syllabus that has to be followed
- RE is an examined subject and this places considerably more emphasis upon acquiring knowledge rather than developing attitudes or improving relationships
- placing parenthood education within a religious context alone did not and could not reflect the much broader scope of issues and themes that a parenthood syllabus seeks to address.

Some elements of parenthood education can be taught successfully within RE. However, the experience of the project did not suggest that this was an appropriate subject within the National Curriculum in which to locate parenthood education as a whole.

Parenthood across the curriculum

Specific efforts were made by some of the core teachers in the project to encourage their colleagues in other subjects such as English, foreign languages, RE, history and science to use relevant activities within the pack as part of their lessons and schemes of work.

On the whole these efforts were unsuccessful. The original National Curriculum concept of cross-curricular themes such as Health and the

Environment pervading all subjects was seen by some senior staff as being an idea which was good on paper but not easy to implement, monitor or evaluate. Without their own place on the timetable these subjects were less likely to be visible and consequently less likely to occur or be properly supported. The practical obstacles to developing co-ordinated work across different subjects and departments in a way that was meaningful to students were seen as insurmountable.

It should be recognised however that in one school the parenthood materials that began in the PSE area were greeted with considerable enthusiasm by staff in other subject areas including English, humanities, science, drama and RE.

Box 3.5

Parenthood across the curriculum

Factors helping to introduce parenthood across the curriculum were:

- an existing and strong base for parenthood education within PSE
- enthusiastic staff leading the topic who see parenthood as a suitable cross-curricular theme
- other staff in existing subject areas who are keen to develop and try out new ideas
- senior staff with responsibilities for both PSE and other curriculum subjects who are directly involved in delivering parenthood education.

Parenthood as an option

Year 12 students (16/17 year-olds) in one school were offered parenthood as an optional area of study. The other choices on offer included sports such as rock climbing, football, and swimming; theatre studies with visits to museums and art galleries; and further study time for those students who were aiming for very high academic achievement. Given this range of choices it was perhaps an achievement that three students opted for the parenthood course.

Not surprisingly, where parenthood is an option that students can choose there is a risk of low take-up in the face of more attractive choices. Given the earlier finding that male students are significantly less interested in parenthood it is also not surprising that the three students who chose the parenthood option were female.

The options approach to introducing parenthood into the curriculum presents practical timetabling dilemmas. The options were presented at the end of Year 11 (15/16 year-olds) but final choices were made at the start of Year 12 after the GCSE results were known. Some of those students who expressed an interest initially left the school to get a job or attend an FE college. Others did better than expected and chose the further study option.

A second option was requested by 15 year-old students at a school where parenthood was not being taught to their year group. They asked to form an 'after school club' to discuss parenthood with one another and with a teacher. This more informal approach led to interesting debates and a positive atmosphere for learning about a subject that they would not otherwise have encountered in the school day. This was an unplanned and unexpected bonus for the project.

Conclusion – the location of parenthood education in the curriculum

Parenthood education can be successfully introduced into the school curriculum through PSE.

The successful introduction of parenthood education in all schools will rely upon the extent to which parenthood becomes a major element in PSE, or its equivalent, and the extent to which this subject area is given a statutory place within the National Curriculum.

Some elements of parenthood education can be taught successfully within RE. However, the experience of the project did not suggest that this was an appropriate subject within the National Curriculum in which to locate parenthood education as a whole.

Parenthood is a subject that readily lends itself to application across a range of subject areas. It could be developed as a cross-curricular subject. This is likely to succeed in only a few schools where the conditions are in place.

Delivering parenthood education as an option in the curriculum is not an appropriate way forward as:

- it will not be attractive to students faced with more overtly relevant or exciting options
- it will not be the choice of students expected to pursue academic choices
- it is likely to attract only female students.

3.3 Parenthood education for students of different ages and abilities

Parenthood education for Years 9, 10 and 11 (13 to 16 year-olds)

The project was originally targeted at 14 to 17 year-olds (Years 10 to 12). However, the project showed that 13 year-old students (Year 9) are also able to enjoy and benefit from learning about parenthood. The work they did was clearly meaningful and relevant to them.

Discussions with teachers and 13 to 16 year-old students highlighted that they were responsive to the lessons for a number of reasons:

- Young people at this age are often in conflict with their parents. The materials relate to these experiences and explore how young people would like to be treated. Every child has relevant experience to draw upon.
- Young people are going through major biological changes at this stage, with many beginning their sexual experiences. The possibility of becoming a parent is one aspect of this emerging sexual self.
- Learning about parenthood was seen by students as being treated as more mature and this in turn generated a more grown-up and interested response, particularly among female students.

Curriculum and examination pressures in Year 11 (15/16 year-olds), however, are at their highest. Students and parents in some schools, while supporting the teaching of parenthood, expressed anxiety that it should not detract from the time and attention needed for students to succeed in their GCSEs. In others it was seen as an integral part of school life and learning.

Parenthood education for Year 12 students (16/17 year-olds)

Two schools with sixth forms delivered parenthood education to Year 12 students (the Lower Sixth) in three ways.

- A six-week block of lessons as part of PSE for every member of Year 12, taught concurrently in six groups of 18 students, each by a different teacher. One of the teachers had been directly involved in the preparation, training and support; the others were given the materials and a short briefing on how to run each session. Other PSE topics included during the year were study skills and health education, often with the involvement of external speakers.
- A half-day session for all Year 12 students as part of their induction week. This was led by two of the teachers who had been directly involved in the preparation, training and support and who had the support of two other staff.

- One afternoon a week over the whole of the school year for three Year 12 female students. This was an option chosen by the students from a range of optional activities such as sport, theatre studies or additional study. The students devised their own curriculum of parenthood activities for the year in collaboration with a member of staff by reading through the pack and planning what to do and when. They were encouraged and chose to use this as an opportunity for personal development through undertaking a number of the community activities in the pack – surveys in the town, visits to shops and so on.

Concerns expressed by some of the teachers delivering parenthood sessions to Year 12 students are described in Box 3.6.

BOX 3.6

Some teachers' reactions to working with year 12 students

- The activities in the pack were not seen as academic enough for Year 12 students. Students were not seen as learning anything from the discussions and activities such as 'cutting and sticking pictures' which were felt to be better suited to a younger age group. As one teacher put it, 'Year 12 students are more intellectually mature and need activities to match'.
 - Some felt there was no need to teach Year 12 students parenthood at all as they had an academic career ahead of them, and may not become parents anyway.
 - Some teachers saw older students as having firm and fixed views and not so able to take other people's points of view on board as younger students.
- These views were not shared by other teachers in the same school or by teachers of Year 12 students in other schools. The experience of the project suggests that parenthood education can be taught successfully to Year 12 students when:
- parenthood is delivered in the context of a part of the Year 12 curriculum that has value and status within the school
 - parenthood is delivered by motivated staff with good groupwork skills who appreciate and reinforce the value of learning through high quality discussion and debate
 - staff draw on their personal experiences to enrich the material and use their personal biases and views openly to stimulate challenge and learning
 - teachers challenge students and conduct debate in a rigorous and discursive style
- students are supported to plan and implement their own parenthood curriculum, drawing on the activities in the pack
 - the type of activities carried out are sufficiently challenging or are presented in challenging ways that stimulate and recognise the ability of older and more academically orientated students
 - opportunities are taken to integrate parenthood education with other 'taught' subjects such as sociology, psychology, RE, etc.

Differentiation for ability

The activities in the resource materials were felt by the teachers to contain a sufficient number of variations in content and methodology to enable them to be selective and creative in planning lessons to match the learning capabilities of different age groups and abilities in mixed ability groups. One teacher was particularly pleased at the response to the activities from students with learning difficulties. 'The special needs students in the groups did really well. I was impressed by their performance and reactions in the lessons.'

Examples of ways that teachers adapted the materials to suit students of differing abilities were to:

- present the instructions on what to do on the chalkboard and talk them through thoroughly rather than copy and hand out the instructions sheets
- use ‘student language’ rather than ‘resource pack jargon’ where this was a barrier
- adapt the timings to suit students who work at different speeds
- split the class up into small groups for discussion
- allow students who are going faster than others to proceed with the next stages in the activity
- use single sex groupings
- challenge older students about their views, and adopt a more discursive and rigorous style of debate.

Conclusion – parenthood education for students of different ages and abilities

Parenthood education can be successfully taught to students in Years 9, 10 and 11 (13 to 16 year-olds) all of whom show interest in the subject, and demonstrate their capacity to learn, enjoy and benefit from their course of study. Parenthood education should not be perceived as a distraction from the time and effort needed to succeed in GCSEs in Year 11. Rather it should be valued in its own right as well as for its contribution to academic success.

Parenthood can be effectively delivered to Years 9, 10, and 11 if teachers are skilled and confident in using a participative, open and facilitative style. Teaching Year 12 students (16/17 year-olds) will also be successful if these skills are employed, together with a challenging and rigorous approach using appropriately targeted and delivered materials.

3.4 Schemes of work

Selecting the activities

The schools’ selection of activities for a scheme of work depended upon a number of factors:

- the parenthood topics felt to be of most importance and relevance
- the age of the students
- time available
- resources available
- time available to go outside the classroom
- ensuring variety of type of activity
- size and layout of the classroom
- the teachers’ preferred style.

The volume of material available in the resource pack was enough to cover a whole year of weekly lessons. With the exception of the small Year 12 group in one school, the teachers were limited by timetable constraints to delivering, at best, a module or scheme of work covering up to six consecutive single lessons (one half-term) for any one year group.

The teachers designed six-week modules by selecting six activities to deliver over six single lessons. Examples of the schemes of work provided are given in Section 1 of this report. It became apparent, however, that the amount of material available and the responses stimulated by the work in one activity alone was often more than could be covered by one lesson of work.

Nonetheless, the six-week module format developed and used for a year group in most of the schools was surprisingly robust. Less than this was felt to be insufficient to achieve any significant impact on the students' attitudes or to cover the principal parenting themes within the resource pack. More than this was felt to be unreasonable given competing demands upon the timetable and the curriculum for students in any single year. While the pack contains much more material than could ever be covered in six consecutive lessons, this six-week module or 'half-term' block for any one year was felt to be:

- sufficient time in which to achieve a measurable impact on the students' knowledge and attitudes towards parenthood
- an appropriate allocation of time in comparison to other PSE topics and themes such as health education and citizenship in any one year
- an appropriate allocation of time to maintain the students' interest
- sufficient time to cover some of the most significant areas of parenthood within the resource pack.

It was clear that six lessons on parenthood were not sufficient to cover the many topics and key areas dealt with in the pack or constitute a comprehensive parenthood curriculum. That would require the introduction of a progressive parenthood education curriculum within PSE for every student in every year from Year 7 to Year 12, a suggestion discussed further in Section 5.

Parenthood education outside the classroom

During the planning and preparation of the course, teachers were encouraged to consider ways of delivering parenthood education outside the classroom through community activities, assemblies, displays and external activities.

Community activities

The community activities undertaken by one school were clearly enjoyed by the students. These involved planning, carrying out and presenting the outcomes of a survey of how accessible the shops were to parents with prams and a survey of the price of goods for children of different ages. In addition to acquiring information relevant to parenthood the activities were particularly useful for this small group in building their self confidence, as well as communication and

BOX 3.7**Comments on community activities**

'Shy pupils beginning to talk more. One said, "I feel happy at the end of this lesson".' (teacher)

'Rather embarrassed at having to stop people and ask them to complete questionnaires. After a while their confidence grew and they became quite talkative. This task gave the pupils some valuable communication skills.' (teacher)

'It was good going down to the shops and meeting people. We used the computer too and then wrote it up on a chart.' (student)

research skills. Box 3.7 describes student and teacher reactions to these community activities.

Assemblies and displays

Some schools encouraged the students to display their materials outside the classroom in the school foyer. In one school assembly students presented their ideas about parenthood. This served to validate the work the students had been doing and to reinforce the value of the activities in the classroom. Each school displayed a notice of its participation in the project in its main foyer.

Workshops

The Year 12 workshop conducted as part of the sixth form induction week was received positively by the students. It was, however, a one-off session that while enjoyable appeared to have limited impact upon the students' attitudes, knowledge or relationships. Such initiatives may be of greater value when the ideas and issues raised are pursued further through subsequent sessions later in the year or related to a previous year's work.

Publicity

There was a high level of interest in the project among the local and national press, TV and radio. The publicity reinforced the value of the work for the students and gave them new experiences such as being interviewed for the radio or being recorded for television. It also achieved positive results for the staff and the schools in their local communities.

Conclusion – schemes of work

A six-week 'half-term' module on parenthood education within PSE is the optimum model to deliver an effective scheme of work for students in any one year.

The pack contains many alternatives for students to work outside the classroom. These are successful in raising student awareness of wider issues such as the cost of parenting and resources to meet parents' needs, and in developing students' communication and information technology skills. Community activities require good planning and organisation if ordinary class sizes are involved, and may be most easily used with smaller groups of older students.

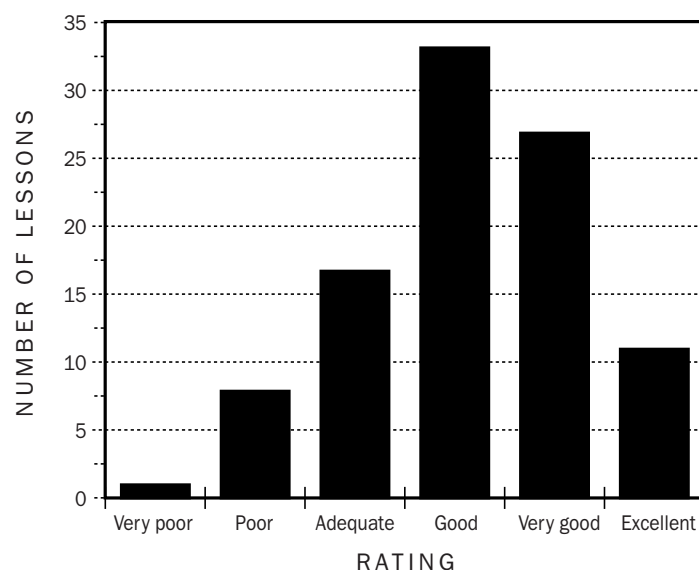
Parenthood education activities outside the classroom such as assemblies and displays have most impact if they take place in the context of a scheme of work within the classroom.

The introduction of parenthood education is, initially, likely to be of considerable interest to the media. This can be used to reinforce learning and

provide additional experiences for the students. It can benefit the school and the teachers although the nature of the media coverage and its impact upon the school needs to be properly managed. The more widespread parenthood education becomes, the less the novelty value for the media.

3.1 Teachers' views of lessons

What is your overall rating of this lesson?



Box 3.8

Teachers' comments on the lessons

'Excellent lesson – well behaved, worked extremely well, no really silly incidents, some very thoughtful answers.'

'An extremely good lesson. Pupils thought through some of their ideas really well.'

'Class did this lesson very well indeed. I asked them to imagine they were a social worker interviewing prospective parents. They were to draw up in pairs a contract showing the things they would expect of a parent. Well done. Generally took it seriously and contributed well.'

'This was one of the best lessons so far. The pupils took the exercise seriously and worked together without disruption.'

'Last lesson of Christmas holidays. Difficult to motivate. Not that responsive. Only completed half the task.'

'Disappointed with their level of interest. Mixed sex and ability groups. Some gained something; many were not interested.'

3.5 Teaching skills and methods

Teaching style

Chart 3.1 shows the overall ratings that teachers gave to their lessons. It shows that most lessons went well with a substantial number being viewed very positively. Only a very few were judged to be poor and these were often attributed to external factors rather than the method or content of the lesson.

The written comments by teachers were recorded in the logbooks and are reproduced in Appendix 4. A representative sample of their comments is given in Box 3.8.

These comments and other feedback show that the assessment of the lessons by the teachers was based on the perceived success of the lesson material or activity in:

- encouraging students to actively participate in the lesson
- prompting lively and absorbing discussion in small groups
- stimulating thoughtful answers to challenging ideas
- being appropriate for the age and ability of the students
- being timed well
- not provoking silly behaviour
- being taken seriously
- enabling the students to learn without doing so too obviously.

In broad terms, the teaching style for parenthood education used by all the teachers was characterised as enabling rather than didactic. The activities in the pack were designed for such an approach. Its benefits were also highlighted by one teacher in one of the training day exercises described in Box 3.9 on the following page.

BOX 3.9**Teaching style**

The core group of teachers produced a 'magazine on flipcharts' as a means of sharing some of their experiences together. One page was an 'agony aunt' column with this letter and reply written by one of the teachers:

*Dear Marge,
My self esteem is at an all-time low. Last week – I am a teacher by the way – after one of my lessons, one of my students said that I talk too much and go on and on. This has really upset me as I thought I was reasonably good at my job. I feel like packing it in! Can you help me?
Yours,
Desperate*

*Dear Desperate,
What did the other students say about you? If the general opinion is that you do talk too much, I think you ought to change your teaching/learning style, or why not hold a debate on the best way of delivering a lesson? Worth a try!
Yours,
Marge*

Challenging students' views

The degree to which the teacher actively steers or directs learning is dependent upon the age and ability of the students and the circumstances such as classroom size, student numbers, time of the school year and risk of disruption at the time.

All the teachers felt that there were often occasions when it was appropriate to present their own viewpoint or to challenge the views of the students. While there were challenges inherent in the activities and materials, there was a risk that students would just repeat what they knew or felt already because they were not presented with an alternative. In some instances it was possible to rely on the diversity of the students' own experiences to provide alternative viewpoints. However, there was a role and a skill for the teacher in judging the time and nature of an intervention that would stimulate further discussion and thinking by the students. One teacher with an overtly Christian perspective found both the views of the students and the style and content of the activities challenging.

When taking a leading role in this way it was crucial that the teacher did not offer a single right

way to be a parent. Instead, the teachers were encouraged to challenge students' views about parenting when they considered them discriminatory, stereotyped or abusive; especially when covering themes such as smacking, parental roles at home, multicultural diversity, single parents or teenage parents. In doing so the teachers were advised to promote alternative views rooted in children's rights, caring for others, valuing diversity and promoting equality of opportunity. This approach was based on the core values subscribed to by the project (see Section 1).

Student expectations

One factor affecting the teaching style adopted was the students' expectations of what counts as learning. Some students expected a didactic style of 'learning by inputs from the teacher' because that was the approach experienced as the norm in the school as a whole. These expectations may be difficult to overcome if students feel they haven't learned anything after they have been heavily engaged in a heated debate because nothing was actually 'taught' to them. As one teacher commented, 'The discussion was good – lots of points raised, challenges, concerns, etc. They got more out of the lesson than they realised.'

In contrast, some students said they looked forward to the lessons because they

knew it would be different from other lessons: there would be more discussions rather than lots of written work or being taught from the front.

BOX 3.10

Teaching skills required for parenthood education

'As a teacher I've realised I don't have all the answers and the students know this too. So I've become more open as we all know we are discovering the answers together.'

'In teaching parenting you are a facilitator – you don't have all the knowledge or all the answers. But some teachers will be fearful of this as you can never be sure where a lesson might go. '

'It is about being non-judgmental but you are still, inevitably, going to be challenging children about how they are being brought up now. And that is risky.'

'This work can open up a can of worms and the students ask some awkward questions.'

Groupwork skills

Students valued the work least when taught by teachers who did not encourage them to value the learning through discussion and debate. Students taught by staff not familiar with groupwork skills also appeared to attach less value to the work. Where problems of poor discipline occurred, the amount of participation was naturally reduced, and the lessons were less effective. The skills being used by the teachers to deliver the material and achieve the intended outcomes are described in the words of the teachers themselves in Box 3.10.

The skills needed to deliver parenthood education well can be characterised as good groupwork skills. They include, but in some respects go beyond, the skills that every teacher needs to be an effective educator in the classroom. Of particular importance in parenthood education is:

- facilitating debate and discussion
- stimulating thinking and ideas through challenge
- genuinely inviting challenge
- admitting mistakes
- being open and inclusive
- being non-judgmental
- using appropriate disclosure to build trust and empathy
- listening and building on student contributions
- timing activities appropriately
- intervening skilfully in small and large groups
- clearly valuing contributions that students make
- identifying and building on the positive elements in a student's contribution.

Staff enthusiasm

Enthusiasm for parenthood was clearly lowest amongst the staff who had no choice in delivering the lessons. It is clearly unrealistic to expect teachers who are not motivated, and who may not have the relevant skills or understanding of the teaching style required, to deliver parenthood education in an effective way.

In one school the headteacher selected the PSE staff from other subject areas, because they possessed particular skills which were effective in a PSE setting. One member of staff said she had been 'pushed rather than volunteered' but was pleased that her particular skills had been recognised. Her classes were very well

received by students and positive outcomes for both students and teacher resulted.

Low staff enthusiasm also conveyed itself to students. Students with a more enthusiastic teacher predictably responded more positively to the work. However, some teachers' critical views about the parenthood lessons were picked up by the students and, in one case, repeated almost word for word as criticisms by the students.

Teachers' attitudes to parenthood

The teachers' own attitudes to parenthood were challenged and changed as a result of the training they experienced and the feedback from and discussions with their students. Aspects of their own attitudes that the material had affected were identified by them as:

- choosing appropriate forms of punishment
- listening to your children
- being reflective
- remaining calm
- the danger of being hypocritical as a parent.

One teacher was particularly aware that teaching parenthood education had changed her as a parent and raised her awareness of the situation that other children experience in their homes: 'Teaching this material has changed me. I am less critical of my children now and realise what pressure my high expectations has on them. I have become more self-critical and more self-aware as a parent. The activity on child abuse changed my perceptions of what is going on in the lives of some children. I was shocked in one case when a student asked me, "Miss, is it child abuse if your dad wakes you up in the morning by punching you in the head?"'

Using personal disclosure

Teachers who could relate their own experiences to the work appeared to be the most successful, particularly where this involved immediately relevant material – either being parents or carers themselves, or of once being a child in their own family. However, teachers' views on making personal disclosures about themselves as parents were mixed.

Some teachers felt that appropriate personal disclosure enriched and brought to life the material they were covering. Students responded positively and enjoyed the opportunity to see and relate to their teacher in a different way – as a person who is a parent as well as a teacher. Those teachers then responded positively to the students' response and a better rapport between teacher and students developed.

Other teachers were less comfortable about sharing information about themselves and their families with the students. The reasons for their reluctance varied including:

- being fearful about how the information might be used
- being concerned about imposing their own views on the students
- being seen as 'unprofessional' in their approach.

It can be concluded that disclosure of personal information by teachers at suitable points in the discussion can be useful but that it is an approach which should be handled with care.

Conclusion – teaching skills and methods

Successful teaching of parenthood education requires staff who:

- have good groupwork and facilitation skills
- have experience of teaching PSE
- have high levels of motivation and enthusiasm
- have chosen to teach the topic
- are prepared to disclose personal experiences if appropriate
- receive support within the school for preparing and teaching the subject.

A sound understanding of the material and appropriate methods for its delivery is clearly also desirable. This is likely to be developed over time through initial in-service training and from repetition of teaching parenthood in different settings and with differing groups of students.

Parenthood should not be taught by staff who:

- have no experience and no aptitude for teaching PSE
- do not have group work skills
- have been compelled to teach the subject
- wish to impose their views about parenting upon students
- have no support or time to prepare themselves.

BOX 3.11

Two approaches to team teaching

The generalist approach

Each member of the team delivered parenthood education in a six-week block at the same time to their own group of students. Once the module was finished the team then delivered another aspect of the PSE curriculum to a group of students. One member of the team was responsible for planning the scheme of work and preparing the materials for use by each of the other members of the team.

The specialist approach

Only two members of the team taught parenthood education to two of the classes of students. Students from other classes were taught other modules of work by other staff. Once the module was complete, the parenthood teachers repeated the module with a different group of students. In effect the students moved round a 'carousel' of topics each taught by staff specialising in that topic.

3.6 School and classroom organisation

Consistency of teacher input

Two very different approaches to the delivery of six-week parenthood education modules by teams of teachers to whole year groups were piloted as part of the project and are described in Box 3.11. It is clear that the specialist approach in which a skilled and motivated teacher delivers a module on parenthood to a succession of groups of students was successful because:

- Parenthood was taught by someone who was motivated and trained to deliver it. Motivation grew as the course became more refined from repeated delivery.
- The teachers became increasingly familiar with the materials and the methods. They became more confident with themselves delivering the lessons, knew what worked well and what did not, and

were better prepared for the reactions that the lessons were likely to stimulate.

- There was no need to arrange hasty or limited briefings of other staff who might be less motivated and not trained to deliver the subject.
- There was less work involved as the lessons and material had to be prepared only once. Small amendments could be accommodated as necessary.

Cover for absent staff

It was inevitable that in some instances, such as illness, a parenthood lesson had to be covered by another member of staff. It proved difficult for a cover teacher to simply teach the lesson prepared beforehand as part of the planned scheme of work. Often the lessons were complex in structure and not easily carried out by someone not fully prepared. The cover teacher also lacked the opportunity to build on ideas or benefit from the rapport developed with the usual teacher.

One solution to this problem is to identify and develop lessons in parenthood that could be taught as 'stop-gaps' by a cover teacher. These could be available within a resource pack to be drawn upon when the circumstances required. These stop-gap lessons would have a simple structure, be timed to begin and end in a single period, and be relatively low-key in respect of sensitive or controversial issues.

Single sex teaching

One of the five pilot schools was chosen because it was a single sex boys' school. Within the four other schools teachers deliberately divided the students into single sex and mixed sex groups on different occasions to assess the difference between the two.

The student questionnaires reveal that male students are generally less interested in parenthood than female students, and although their interest and knowledge increased after the parenthood lessons they remained less enthusiastic than their female peers. Despite this, male students with enthusiastic teachers demonstrated positive interest in parenthood, although some teachers experienced the older male students in their single sex group as being dismissive of the subject. However, those same male students responded positively when discussing parenthood in a different classroom setting and with a different person. It is significant that a group of Year 9 male students (13 year-olds) who took part in the parenthood education course in one of the schools have now chosen to pursue an NVQ course in child care in Year 10.

At one school the school nurse commented, 'Boys who I thought would struggle with this type of information got a lot from the classes because they related it to their own direct experience. Everybody has experience of being parented, don't they?'

The experience of the all-boys school was that students were generally enthusiastic and comfortable in talking about their experiences and developing their views amongst their peers.

BOX 3.12**Student comments on single sex teaching**

'It was treated as a joke in the boys group. People said it was boring and covered stuff we knew already.'

'The title put a lot of the boys off. They thought it was irrelevant. But this changed when we did the work because it was more about relationships than parenting.'

'We were better in a mixed group because it stopped people being "laddish". We behave better in front of the women.'

'The debate we had was totally one-sided and condemned men as bad ... It tried to make us feel guilty and it was anti-male.'

'It is useful for us all to do it – boys and girls.'

'We liked being in an all girl group with a woman teacher. She was really good at talking about what she thought as a parent and in letting us talk about it.'

Female students in the other schools valued the opportunity to work in single sex groups when discussing some aspects of parenthood such as the role of the mother within the home, their approach to working mothers and when discussing how to deal with male children. In other areas of the work, such as family relationships and handling difficult behaviour, they expressed a wish to work with boys so that they might gain insight into the male perspective.

Clearly students of both genders need skilled and enthusiastic teaching in order to benefit from parenthood education. Although parenthood can be taught effectively in single sex settings, students also benefit from working in mixed gender groups depending on the topic under discussion. Some of the students' comments on parenthood and single sex teaching are given in Box 3.12.

Observation and feedback from the students and the teachers in the questionnaires and log-books indicates that:

- Teaching parenthood to male students in single or mixed sex situations may, generally, be more demanding as they show less initial interest in parenthood than female students.
- Male students in single sex schools will respond positively to lessons about parenthood. Those in co-educational schools respond in more mature and constructive ways in mixed sex groupings.
- Female students in co-educational schools may prefer working in a single sex group if the male students evidently do not want to take the subject as seriously as they do.
- Female students are often more physically and emotionally mature than male students of the same age. This is reflected in their interest and the way they respond to discussions about parenthood.

Cross-cultural teaching

The resource materials were written to be inclusive and to reflect the pluralism of our society without generalising about parenting in other cultures.

There was little difference between students of different ethnic origins in the level and nature of their interest, responsiveness or development as a result of the course of study. Some teachers requested more factual information about parenting in other countries and cultures – particularly from countries of the South or Third World – and identified the need to develop more materials directly relevant to Asian cultures. Producing some course materials in other languages as appropriate was also felt to be worth considering.

There were no negative reactions from governors, parents or students from any of the minority ethnic communities involved or those of differing religious beliefs about the content or style of the parenthood lessons, and no criticism that the approach to exploring values about parenting showed any unacceptable cultural bias.

Handling personal and sensitive issues

Teachers in the schools regularly witnessed children in their lessons revealing issues and problems that might otherwise have remained hidden. Some of the activities asked students to draw upon their personal experiences when doing the work, such as mapping their own network of family and friends. Other activities dealt with themes about parenthood that could trigger sensitive issues for students such as divorce and separation; conception, pregnancy and abortion; child abuse and death. As well as being sensitive to these issues, the teachers recognised that they needed to be sensitive to differences in the lifestyles, social backgrounds and cultural variety of the parenting experienced by the students.

Guidance on how to respond in the classroom, the role and use of the school pastoral system, questions of confidentiality and where to go for further advice was given in the training. The teachers discussed the need to be aware, before starting a lesson, of the potential for personal and sensitive issues to arise, to have the skills to deal with them and to know where to turn for support if further action was needed. All the teachers felt it was inappropriate to establish new ground rules of confidentiality for this project.

The teachers varied in the confidence and skills they displayed in handling the responses of students. Depending upon the circumstances, the teachers responded to students' personal issues by:

- following up students' personal problems themselves within the school setting
- using the school's pastoral care system if students disclosed information about their home lives that needed to be acted upon outside the lessons
- avoiding promoting one model of family structure as an ideal and avoiding making broad generalisations about differences in parenting styles that could lead to false and inaccurate stereotypes
- encouraging students to look for similarities in underlying values about parenthood rather than focusing on superficial differences in parenting styles
- understanding that if they disclosed something about themselves to the students then it was done without any expectation that it would remain confidential.

Advice on how to handle personal and sensitive issues was available in the resource materials.

Timing and pace

The activities in the pack always took longer to complete than anticipated. Those that stimulated debate and discussion could have taken as long as the students wanted and, sometimes, artificial time limits had to be imposed rather than waiting for a discussion to end naturally.

The practical activities involving completing questionnaires or laying out and discussing materials such as pictures or statements also took longer than anticipated. Some activities led on from the original starting point to topics and issues that were a long way from where the discussion began. As one teacher put it: 'I went off at a totally different tack from the lesson plan. I think this lesson could be developed in greater detail and contain much more material'.

Flexibility to allow this to happen is vital but can obviously be disruptive to the original planning. It can also create difficulties if different groups within a classroom are devoting varying amounts of time to the same activity. It is better to underestimate rather than overestimate the time that activities are likely to take since any surplus time can easily be filled with a follow-on activity.

Student assessment and lesson evaluation

The pre-course and post-course questionnaires completed by the students were designed specifically as an evaluation tool for this project. Using an identical questionnaire before and after the course of study was useful in assessing the impact of the work on the students.

Many students also completed a self-assessment questionnaire contained in the resource materials entitled 'Thinking ahead'. This activity was designed to be used at the beginning of the course of study and proved useful in 'tuning up' the students to what the subject was about and in encouraging them to reflect on their current levels of interest and knowledge.

Assessing output

The students produced different kinds of outputs in the lessons: these included written work as well as various practical activities, and their contributions to discussion. The students also made comments on their work in their logbooks. Teachers too made observations about the students' development, as well as the lessons, in their own logbooks.

Certificates of achievement

Many of the students were given certificates of achievement at the completion of their course of study. These could be included in any portfolio system being used in the school for gathering evidence of work across a range of disciplines and activities.

Examinations and qualifications

None of the pilot schools taught parenthood as part of a course leading to a qualification. In practical terms this was not possible to organise within the short lifetime of the project. However, there was also little enthusiasm for doing so as every teacher valued the style of participative learning and the emphasis in the materials on developing attitudes rather than increasing knowledge.

Some of the 'knowledge' components of a future 'parenthood syllabus' might be included as part of a short course within or linked directly to other examined

subjects such as RE, sociology, childcare or technology. This could be assessed and evidence of achievement gathered in portfolios to contribute to a GCSE or NVQ qualification. The dilemmas associated with creating a formally accredited and certificated course in parenthood education are discussed in Section 5 of this report.

Conclusion – school and classroom organisation

The specialist approach in which a skilled and motivated teacher delivers a module on parenthood to a succession of groups of students proved to be the most successful. There is a need to develop lessons in parenthood that can be taught as ‘stop-gaps’ by teachers covering for a colleague’s absence.

Students need skilled and enthusiastic teaching in order to benefit from parenthood education. Parenthood can be taught effectively in single sex settings. Students also benefit from working in mixed and single sex groups depending on the topic under discussion.

Teachers need to be aware, before starting a lesson, of the potential for sensitive issues to arise, to have the skills to deal with them and to know where to turn for support if further action is needed.

Flexibility is important and it is better to underestimate rather than overestimate the time that activities are likely to take.

It is useful to encourage students to reflect on what they have learned and how they might have developed as a result of the lessons through before-and-after questionnaires, and through assessing course work and output. The nature and quantity of work undertaken could be usefully recorded in a portfolio system for certification. While accreditation of courses might have value, assessment of students leading to a qualification requires further consideration.

3.7 School management

The successful introduction and delivery of parenthood education requires the active support of the school’s management. A number of clear lessons emerged from the five schools about precisely what management support is required.

A valued subject

For parenthood education to be successful, personal education and development must be valued and given priority as a core part of the school curriculum. The benefits to students of experiencing the methods and topics of this kind of approach need to be fully recognised both in their own right as a valuable part of development and in the positive contribution made to their wider academic success and achievement. Parenthood needs to be given priority alongside other core themes such as citizenship, sex education and drug awareness.

BOX 3.13**The importance of management support**

As mentioned, the core group of teachers produced a 'magazine on flipcharts' as a means of sharing some of their experiences together. One of the pages was an advert for a PSE co-ordinator:

WANTED!

PSE CO-ORDINATOR

Enthusiastic, committed PSE co-ordinator to lead a mixed team in the delivery of PSE to Years 10 and 11. The school is currently piloting an exciting national project which aims to introduce parenting skills into the curriculum. You will need to:

- co-ordinate a team of 'individuals'
- be able to negotiate quality time in the curriculum
- raise awareness of the importance of PSE.

Candidate should wear a blue lycra suit with red underpants on the outside and be prepared to spin around in phone boxes.

Management support

As well as being enthusiastic for the subject, managers within the school need to ensure that adequate resources are provided, a clear place within the timetable allocated and protected, and staff with good PSE skills selected, trained and supported.

The active involvement of a head of department or a senior teacher in planning and delivering parenthood, at least in the first years of its introduction, is one visible way of demonstrating management support. In small schools this can be effectively handled by the commitment of the headteacher. In bigger schools a head of faculty can demonstrate this commitment. However, it is important that PSE and parenthood education are not given only the appearance of support by allocating senior staff to teach it if in practice those staff are not specialists and are often called away from the parenting lessons to carry out other duties.

The importance of management support and of giving PSE greater priority emerged during one of the training days for the teachers as shown in Box 3.13.

Timetabling

Many of the teachers emphasised the importance of having a 'good' day in the school week and a good time in that day to teach the parenthood lessons. Not surprisingly, the last period on a Friday afternoon was felt to be the worst time. There was less consensus about what constituted a 'good' allocation either in terms of days of the week or times of the day. Much depended upon what lessons or students the teachers had been teaching before the parenthood lesson, and on what teacher or subject the students had been exposed to before the lesson.

Nonetheless, timetabling was seen as a key indicator of the importance and priority attached to the subject. Being given a 'bad' slot showed that while people might say the subject was important, this action indicated it was seen as of less priority than other 'core' subjects. Some staff were allocated timetable slots for parenthood only to have them changed or be taken off the timetable later. This also demonstrated the lack of support for the subject.

In some of the schools, timetabling in general was seen as something over which the teachers had little control – a process carried out by more senior people using processes that were unclear and unseen. This feeling of disempowerment, where it existed, clearly demotivated staff. Teachers were most dissatisfied when they felt uninvolved and at the receiving end of a decision over which they had

no influence. This contrasted sharply with the feeling of support and motivation among those staff who had some influence, control and involvement in the timetabling discussions. This is clearly an issue with wider implications for school management in general.

Training

The project budget covered the cost of supply cover for the core group of teachers who were attending the training sessions or management committee meetings.

The teachers felt the training was of value in developing their understanding of the materials, giving an opportunity to try out activities, and providing a forum for planning and reviewing their work. Some of the staff were responsible for briefing other colleagues who were to deliver parenthood classes. The time available for this was usually minimal – in one case no more than a brief discussion during lunch break. The contrast between the amount of training given to the core group and that which they were able to pass on to their colleagues was stark.

The level of training in the project is unlikely to be available to or affordable by most schools in the future. For them the only real opportunity for training will be to run sessions themselves during the school's in-service training and development (INSET) days.

At the conclusion of the project, each LEA also ran a half-day seminar for teachers and other professionals in their area where the core teachers and their pupils presented the work they had been doing. These were separately funded and demonstrated one useful way that LEAs can give real and practical support to the introduction of parenthood education in local schools.

Conclusion – school management

The successful introduction and delivery of parenthood education requires the active support of the school management.

For parenthood education to be successful, PSE or its equivalent must be valued within schools and established as a core part of the school curriculum.

Senior staff including the headteacher and the governing body need to show active support for PSE and parenthood education.

Timetabling is a key indicator of the importance and priority attached to the subject.

Staff who have some influence, control and involvement in timetabling discussions feel the most supported and motivated.

Staff training for parenthood education should be provided during INSET days.

LEAs can give real and practical support by organising half-day seminars for teachers and other professionals in their respective areas.

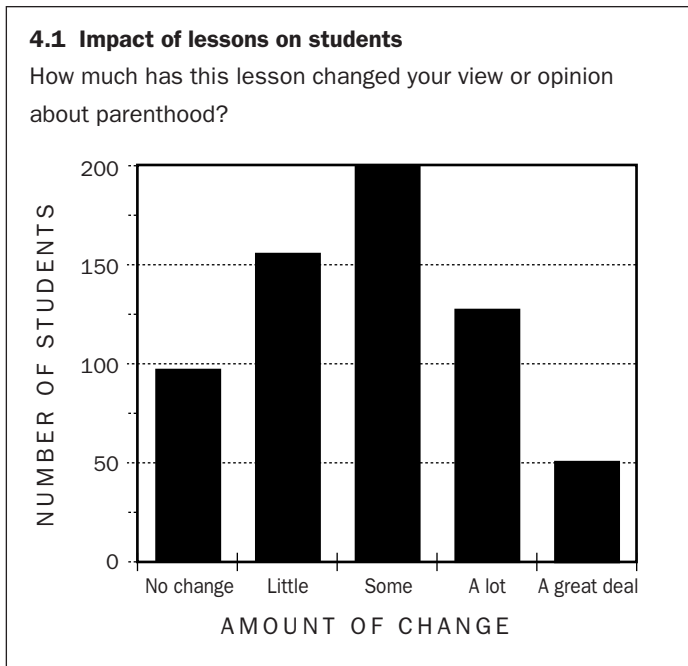
SECTION 4 THE IMPACT OF PARENTHOOD EDUCATION ON STUDENTS

4.1 Introduction

This section describes the knowledge, attitudes and skills acquired by students as a result of the parenthood classes. It highlights the impact upon their relationships with their peers, teachers and parents. It also describes the response of students and their parents to introducing education for parenthood in school.

The information is derived from feedback from students and their parents in the before-and-after questionnaires, the logbooks and the interviews which are reproduced in the appendices. Where there has been a change in students' views that is statistically significant or very significant this is referred to as such in the analysis.

Appendix 3 provides a list of written comments by the students about the lessons they attended. It includes a rating of the extent to which they thought the lessons changed their views or opinions about parenthood. It is worth pointing out here that Chart 4.1 shows that nearly 60% of the 631 students who gave a rating felt that the lessons had made some or a considerable impact upon their views on parenting.



4.2 Increased knowledge about parenthood

The topics taught in school

The knowledge about parenthood that students developed during the course of study varied according to the topics and activities that the teachers chose to include within their schemes of work. Topics covered by the majority of students in the five schools followed a similar sequence with an introductory session to 'tune in' to what parenthood was really about, and to introduce the style of teaching and the type of materials to be used.

The bulk of the activities carried out in the schemes of work focused on a number of specific issues – particularly those concerning relationships, roles and responsibilities. Most schools ended the scheme of work with a review, asking the students to think in some way about what they had learned and what their learning about parenthood would mean for them as parents in the future. The most frequent topics covered were:

- thinking ahead
- corporal punishment and child abuse
- parents' influence upon children
- motherhood and fatherhood

- The reasons for and consequences of being a parent
- what it means to be a parent
- legal, moral and social rights of children at different ages
- what it takes to be a parent.

Other topics covered, though by fewer numbers of students, were:

- resources in the community to support parents
- happy, safe and healthy homes for children
- family structures
- conception, pregnancy and birth.

Student learning

One of the means of students evaluating the content and methods of the lessons was the use of a logbook. This comprised a series of sheets to be completed at the end of each lesson asking for the students' comments and rating the lesson on a scale from one to five. The completed sheets were then analysed. Many of the quotes which appear throughout this report are taken from these logbooks. A selection of comments from the student logbooks are reproduced in Appendix 3. The logbooks show that students gained most knowledge and understanding in the six main areas described in Box 4.1.

BOX 4.1

Main areas of student learning

<i>Areas of learning</i>	<i>Examples of students' comments</i>
The responsibilities that parenthood brings	'It stopped me from thinking – I want one of those [babies]'
The need to be prepared for parenthood	'Now I've realised that what's involved in being a parent is a lot harder than I thought'
The skills and qualities that parents require	'It made me clearer about how I'd like to be as a parent'
The impact of parenthood on relationships	'Changed my mind about young people having a baby because it just changes your relationship so much'
The potential impact of parenthood on their	'I have thought a lot about the effects of a baby on my university future prospects and careers course'
Themselves and their own thoughts and feelings	'It's like sorting out the "shoulds" for ourselves'

Other evidence of students' increased knowledge came from their parents. Parents who replied to the questionnaire were clearly aware of the work their children were doing in school. One remarked 'I think she's learned a lot. We've talked about it and she seems to know a lot more than I did at her age'. The topics that parents thought their child had been taught at school – based on what their children had told them – are shown in box 4.2:

BOX 4.2**Topics that parents thought their child had studied**

Topic	Ranking	%
What parenthood involves	1	61
The responsibilities of parenting	2	53
How parenthood changes your life	2	53
How children respond to different ways that parents treat them	4	51
Love, commitment and emotional bonds between parents and children	5	48
Child abuse and children's rights	6	43
Why people become parents	7	40
Conception and pregnancy	8	39
What makes a happy, safe and healthy home for children	9	38
Financial costs of parenting	10	35
Everyday skills and qualities for looking after children	11	34

BOX 4.3**Debating motherhood and fatherhood**

Students were asked to prepare for a parliamentary style debate on a motion, for example, 'A father's place is in the home' or 'Mothers should receive a wage for bringing up children'. Resource sheets provided facts and figures on:

- the cost of childcare and domestic tasks
- roles played in the home
- parents' legal responsibilities
- reasons for women not being in paid employment.

A resource sheet posing questions about motherhood and fatherhood was included to stimulate ideas for debate. The students first carried out a secret ballot to see how many were for and against the motion. They then divided into two equal groups and each member prepared a two minute speech in support of their group's position. The debate itself took around 40 minutes and a chairperson organised it so that speeches from each side were heard in sequence. Some heckling was permitted but no bad language, sexist or racist remarks or physical contact.

After the debate, a vote was taken and compared with the secret ballot taken at the beginning. A discussion about the issues debated then began with students saying what they really thought. Follow on activities included: looking at the media's portrayal of motherhood and fatherhood, obtaining the views and opinions of other students about these roles and writing a description of the roles students think they might personally play when they become parents.

Knowledge was acquired through a range of methods including use of activities in the resource materials, discussion, reading a range of prepared material, teacher input and input by external presenters. An example used in the classroom involved students finding out about the differences and similarities between motherhood and fatherhood as described in Box 4.3.

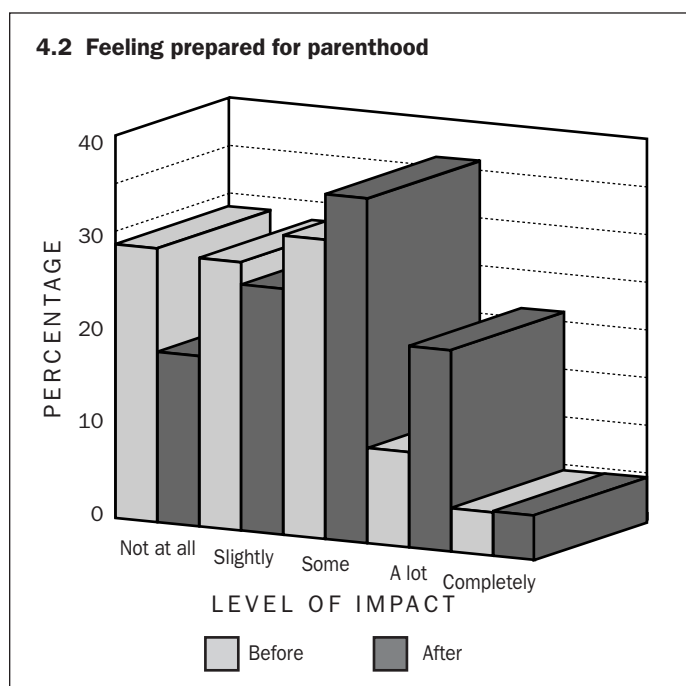
This activity gave students access to a range of information, introduced them to a form of argument they may not have used before, gave them some experience of working as a team under pressure and an opportunity to practise their presentation skills in front of their peers. The core group of teachers tried out this activity during the training. This helped them to see the effect it could have on students and how best to use it with different groups.

Like many activities in the resource materials, this was designed to increase students' knowledge in a participative way through:

- the use of accurate and accessible facts and figures presented within the context of a stimulating activity
- groupwork methods to increase students' interest and motivation
- challenging the students' analytical and assimilation skills.

4.3 Feeling prepared for parenthood

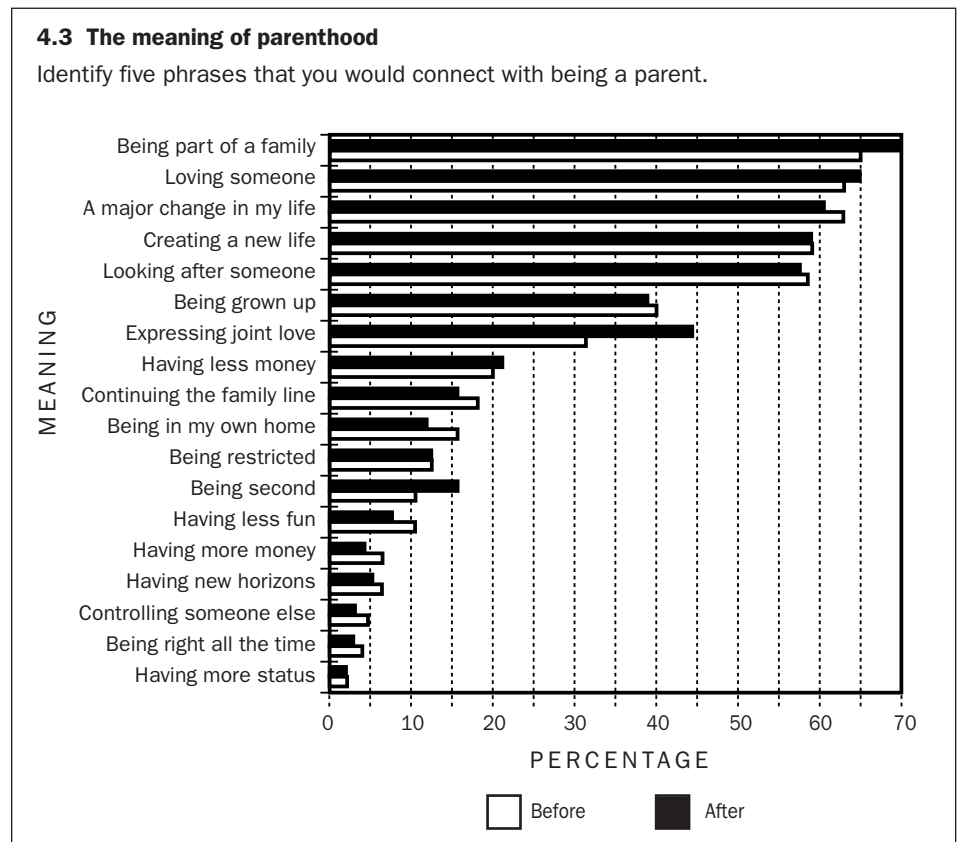
The students answered the questionnaire about their views on parenthood for a second time at the end of their course of study. Appendix 2 gives the findings for both the before and the after questionnaires. Chart 4.2 shows that students in general felt that the work they had done had helped them to be better prepared as parents and more responsible for looking after a child.



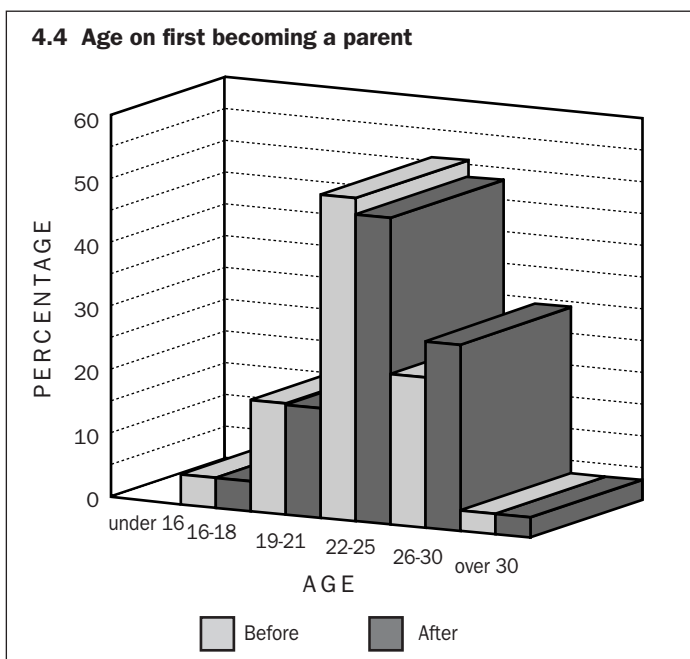
4.4 Developing attitudes about parenthood

Appreciating what parenthood might mean

Students were asked to choose five phrases from the list provided that they connect with being a parent. Chart 4.3 shows that the number of students who said that parenthood meant 'expressing joint love' and 'being part of a family' increased after the course of study. Students from lone parent families were less inclined after the course of study to view parenthood as 'less fun' and were less inclined to view parenthood as 'a new horizon'.



Female students were, after their course of study, less inclined to view parenthood as representing 'creating a new life' and less inclined to view it as representing 'a major change in their life'. Male students were more inclined to view parenting as meaning 'being grown up' and less inclined to view it as meaning 'less money'.



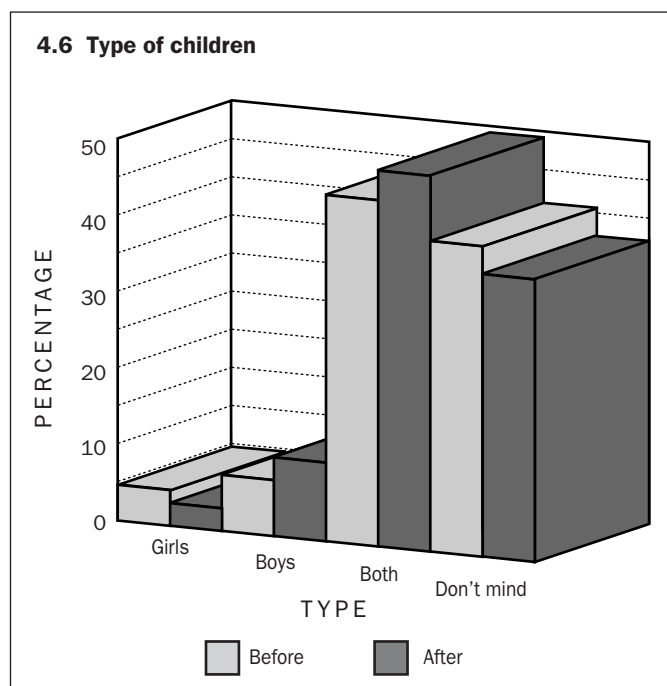
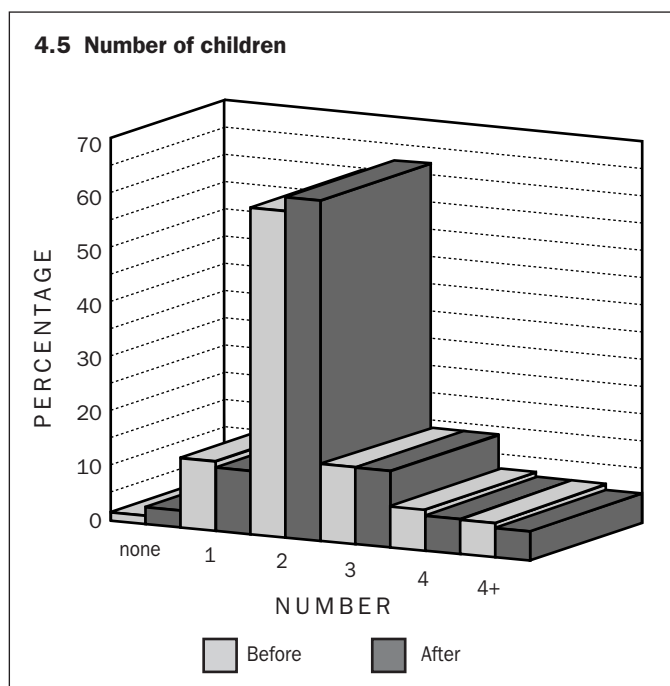
Asian students were less inclined to view parenthood as meaning 'being grown up' after their course of study. White students were less inclined to view parenthood as meaning 'being restricted' and 'less money'.

Changing expectations about being a parent

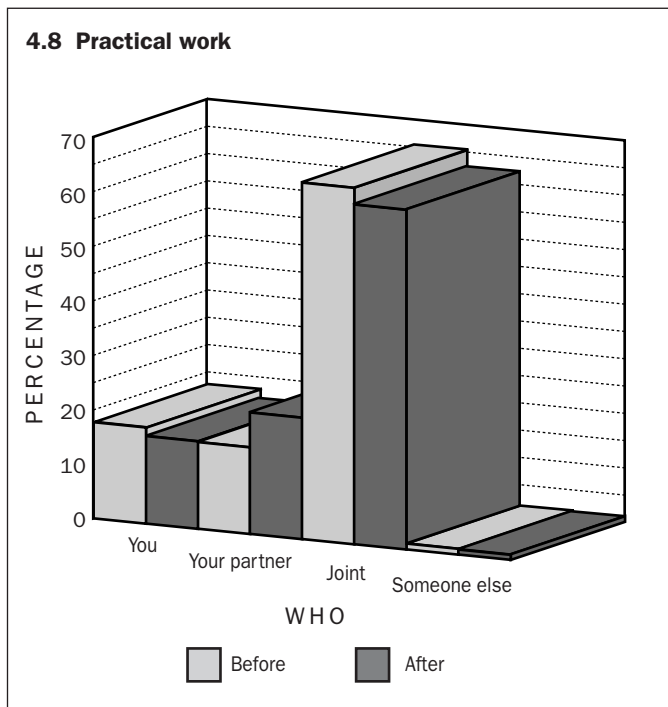
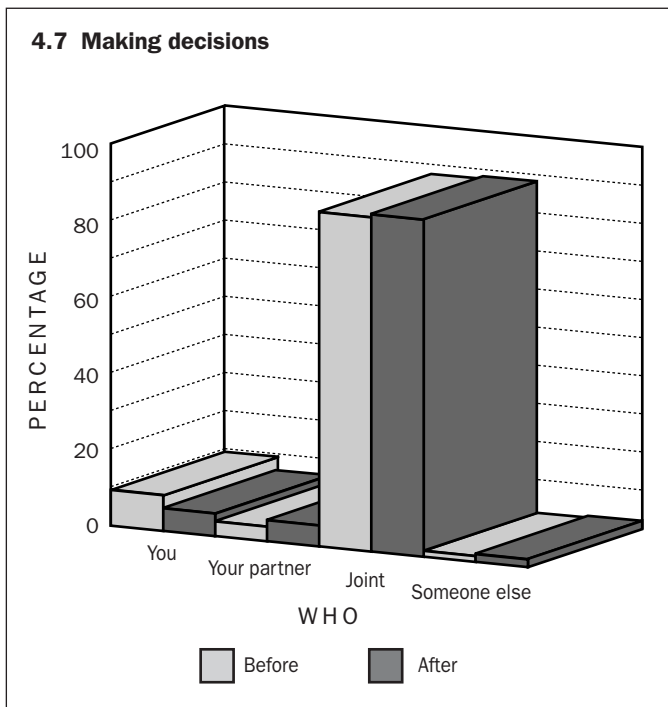
Chart 4.4 shows that more students thought, after their course of study, that they would first become a parent at an older age. Older students in particular thought they would first become a parent at an older age.

Chart 4.5 shows a small increase in the proportion of students wanting two children after the course of study.

Chart 4.6 shows a small increase in the proportion of students wanting both a boy and a girl, and a small increase in those wanting a boy only. This particular outcome in the survey of students' views may be affected by the disproportionate number of boys completing the 'after' questionnaire as more of those who want a boy only are male students. Asian students were more inclined than white students to want a mixed boy / girl family after the course of study.



Charts 4.7 and 4.8 show that the students' work on parenthood had little impact on their views about who takes responsibility for decision making and practical parenting work. There was a slight increase in those saying that they expect their partner would do the practical work. Again, this shift is likely to be the result of the disproportionate number of male students taking part in the second survey, since a significant number of male students thought that the practical work of parenting ought to be undertaken by their partner.



BOX 4.4

Student attitudes to parenthood after the course

'I'm starting to think it's too much like hard work for me.'

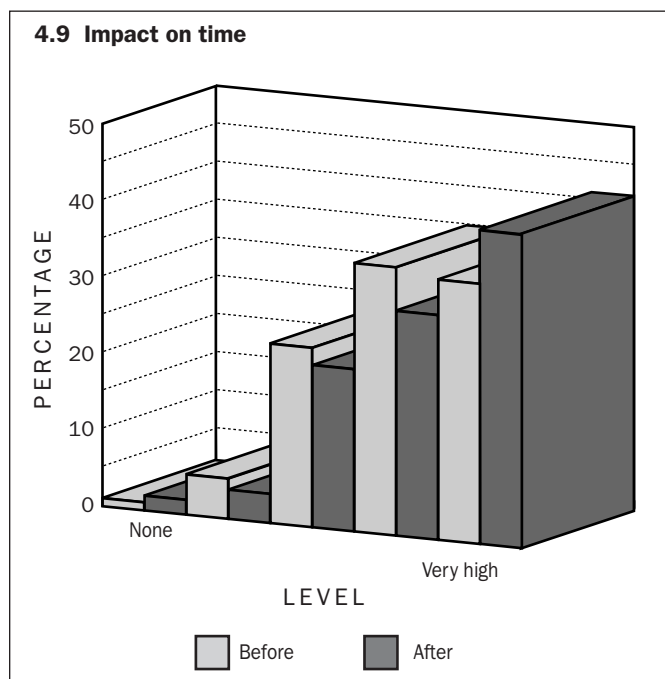
'It makes you look at it in a different way.'

'Those stories made me think about my future.'

Understanding the impact of parenting on people's lives

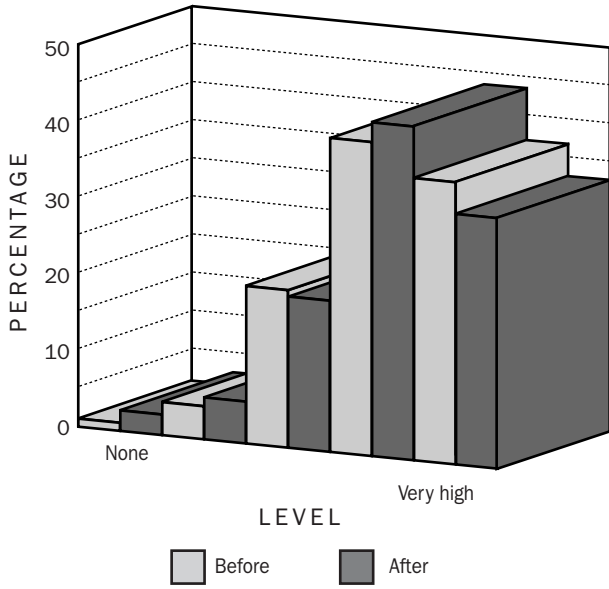
Gaining an appreciation of what impact becoming a parent might have on your life is an essential part of the preparation for parenthood – perhaps the most essential. Box 4.4 gives comments showing how some students began to realise what being a parent might mean for them and their lives.

This shift in awareness is reflected in Chart 4.9 which shows that more students in general felt that parenthood would have an even higher impact upon how they

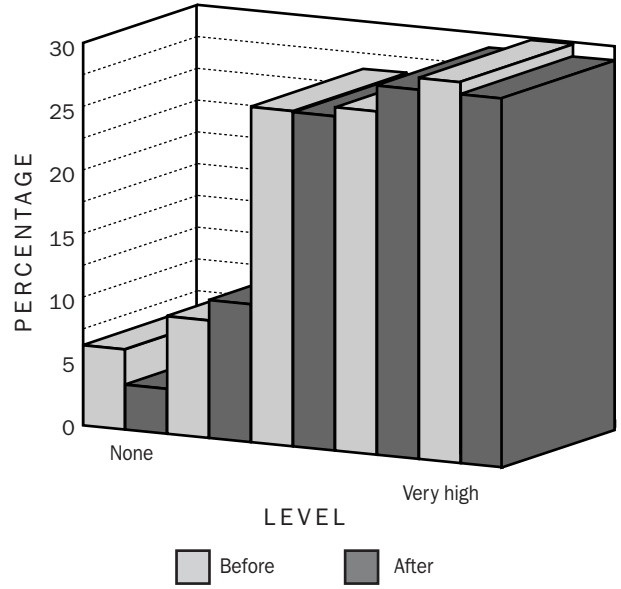


would spend their time than they envisioned before the course. Charts 4.10, 4.11 and 4.12 on the following page show that their original view that parenthood would have a high impact upon how they spend their money, having a full-time job, or going to college or university remained the same.

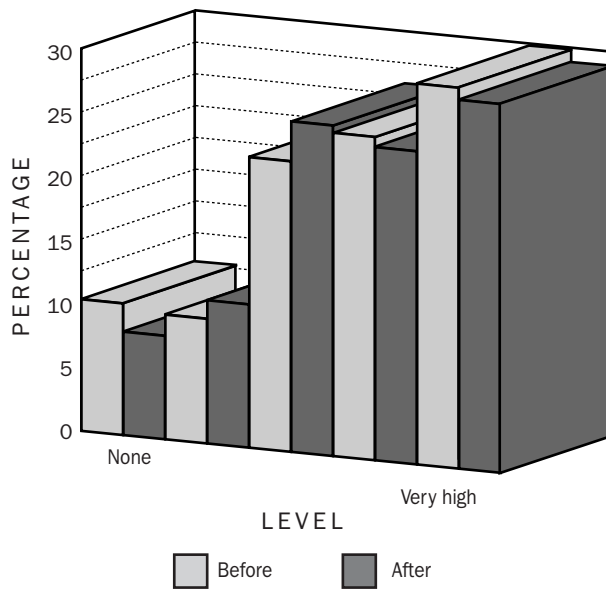
4.10 Impact on money



4.11 Impact on full-time work



4.12 Impact on further education



4.5 Developing skills for parenting

Communication skills

The project found that communication was crucial both for effective parenting and for effective learning. First, communication skills were a key feature of four of the top six parenting skills identified by students. The others were: 'teaching your child good manners', 'having the energy to deal with bad behaviour without smacking', 'coping well with a baby that cries for long periods of time' and 'able to negotiate and resolve conflicts' with children.

BOX 4.5

Emotional bonds

In this activity students listened to various writings about a parent/child relationship. These included extracts from Sara Maitland, Kahlil Gibran, Virginia Woolf, Benjamin Zephaniah, Ted Hughes and Sylvia Plath. In small groups the students then described what they thought these writers were trying to convey in relation to:

- their feelings about children
- their relationships with children
- the impact that being a parent has on a person.

Later they were encouraged to write their own short pieces about parenthood.

This activity helped to create a sensitive and responsive atmosphere. In subject terms it had an English focus and relied heavily on good communication skills – listening, speaking and interpreting. It also encouraged in the students the development of literacy skills in the students and interpersonal skills during discussion.

BOX 4.6

Developing communication skills

'I've learned to talk things over.' (student)

'The atmosphere improved when they started discussing the questions. As time went by they got more interested in arguing about the answers to the questions.' (teacher)

'Put many valuable communication skills across as pupils worked in pairs going around the shops making observations.' (teacher)

'They were quiet and well behaved – but I'm not sure that was my objective.' (teacher)

'I think she has had some good fun putting her point of view forward, especially on the radio with her teacher.' (parent)

Second, the project demonstrated that students' communication skills developed as a result of taking part in the parenthood classes. Box 4.5 describes an activity titled 'emotional bonds' that explored the emotional relationship between children and parents, and in which students used a variety of communication skills.

Comments about the development of communication skills appear in Box 4.6. Students were asked to communicate with their peers and teachers in many different ways including:

- verbally, face to face in debate and interviews
- in groups as part of a structured discussion or working as a team
- through written materials such as stories, poems and leaflets
- through art work such as devising posters and charts
- through information technology such as devising and analysing questionnaires
- through drama such as writing scripts and doing role play
- with adults such as interviewing people in the street or their teachers.

BOX 4.7

Taming temper tantrums

Students were asked to consider situations that parents of young children might find it difficult to deal with, to draw up possible responses to these and to discuss which response might work best. The students then arrived at some general conclusions about how to handle such difficulties and prepared a list of handy hints.

Follow-on activities included inviting someone from a local organisation working with parents and young children to come and speak, and surveying parents' most common problems and responses. Resource sheets accompanying the activity include lists of difficult behaviours and parents' responses to them and a flow chart showing how these situations might be handled.

Specific skills for handling relationships

Although the parenthood classes were not primarily designed to impart practical skills, some skills development on the subject of relationships was encouraged. These skills, such as those used to handle conflicts, limit bad behaviour and offer praise where due were sometimes directly relevant to being a parent but were more often useful in any relationship. Box 4.7 describes an activity concerned with temper tantrums.

This proved a popular activity with the students and demonstrated that there are specific, practical skills for parenting that

can be imparted and learned. It also showed that these can be usefully considered by young people long before they have children of their own as shown by their comments in Box 4.8.

BOX 4.8

Student comments on learning parenting skills

'I used to think that you'd just know how to deal with your own child – it's more difficult than we thought.'

'It gave me some sensible advice about being a parent.'

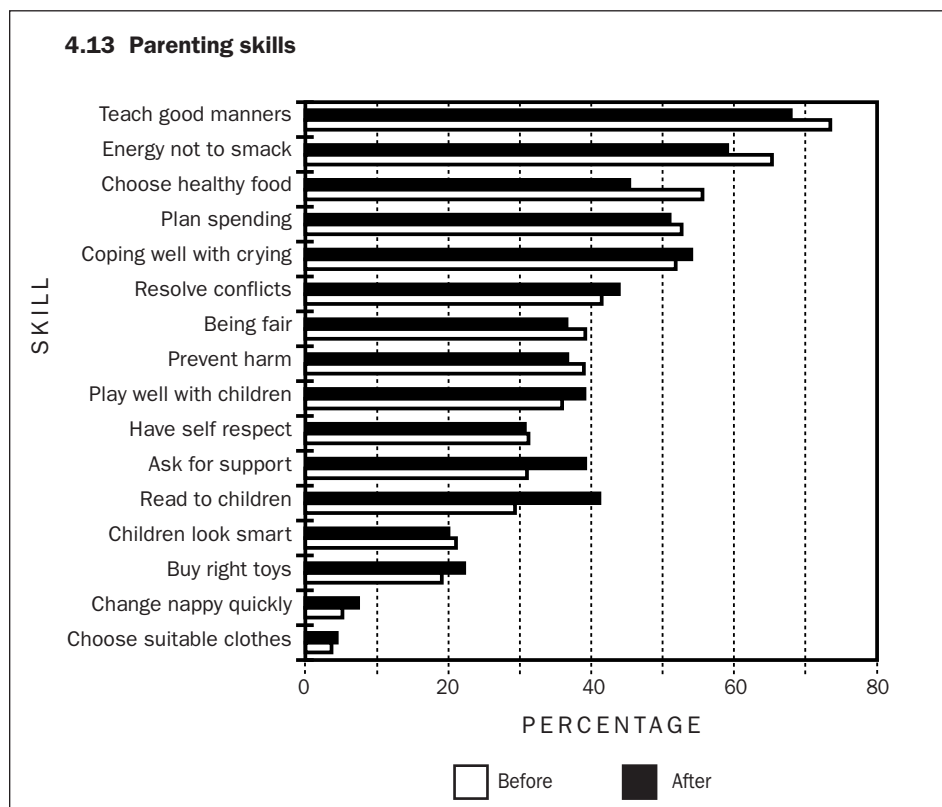
'We learned how much time and love children need.'

'I know how I am going to handle life when I have children.'

'I'd think twice about smacking my child.'

The importance of different parenting skills

Chart 4.13 shows that students' views about the most important parenting skills changed after the course of study. There was an increase in the number who



identified 'reading to your children', 'asking for support', 'playing well' and 'coping with crying' as most important. Fewer students identified 'teaching good manners', 'having the energy not to smack' and 'choosing healthy food' as important.

4.6 Developing young people's relationships

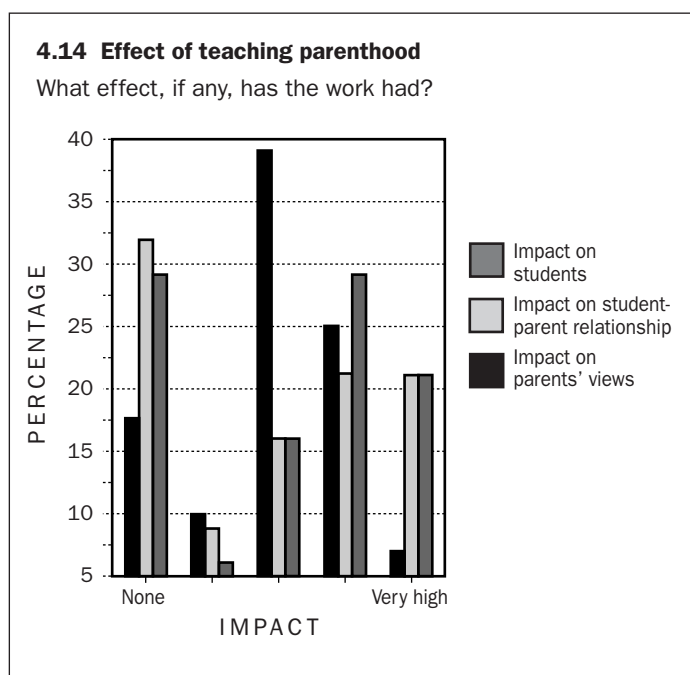
Students' relationships with their parents

The evaluation of the project included gathering the views of the students' parents. Parents' views about parenthood education generally, and the particular work their children had done, were acquired through questionnaires and interviews with parents after their child had experienced the course of study. The full questionnaire is reproduced in Appendix 5.

The parents interviewed were pleased that their children were undertaking parenthood classes and some found that their children were more understanding and sympathetic to their role as a parent as a result. Others observed that they were being asked more questions about what it is to be a parent than before. One student appeared on local radio following publicity for the project. Afterwards her father commented, 'I'm divorced from Rosie's mother, so I don't have day-to-day contact with Rosie, but we did talk about what she was learning when she went on the radio. I do think it's something they should be doing, and it gives them a chance to see what it's like for us – it's not easy.'

Chart 4.14 shows that the majority of parents said that their child's involvement in the parenthood project had an impact on their child's views about parenting. The majority also felt that it had an impact on their relationship with their child and on their own views and actions as a parent.

As the comments in Box 4.9 show, this view about the impact of the work on their relationships with their parents was reinforced by the students.



Box 4.9

Improving student-parent relationships

'Now I know why my parents say I can and can't do things.'

'I've learned a lot from my mother bringing me up.'

'It made me think really hard about my family.'

'I thought my dad didn't love me ... but now I understand he does – he just can't show it.'

BOX 4.10**Students working together****Teachers**

'I think the most useful part of this activity was the chance for the students to talk together. It always took up longer than I planned.'

'The discussion highlighted many differences between students, but also led to some consensus about the fundamental points.'

Students

'One thing I didn't like about this activity was having to sit next to a boy.'

'I was pleased we worked in mixed [gender] groups, because I hadn't realised that boys had thought about these things at all.'

'I already thought about this with my mates, like how we would treat our kid, ie play football with them.'

'I learned from other people's opinions ... from working with the boys – they thought they had a different role to play ... but after the discussion, we all felt we'd want to do it all really.'

'I like this discussion. It showed that my values were the same as my friends.'

Students' relationships with their peers

Much of the students' learning in parenthood classes occurred in groups with their peers. Students saw a number of advantages to thinking together about becoming parents, as well as talking about it at home with their own parents. Teachers too, thought that the students benefited from working with one another as shown in the comments in Box 4.10.

Students' relationships with their teachers

Some student-teacher relationships changed considerably as a result of the parenthood classes. For those already involved with the students as form or year tutors, the relationships were often strengthened as shown by the comments in Box 4.11. For teachers who would not routinely have been in touch with the students, teaching parenthood proved an opportunity for new contacts. Those teachers who were associated chiefly with their main curriculum subject were viewed by students as 'more like real people'.

Although not all the teachers were parents, all of them were able to relate their own experiences of being parented. Students commented that this made the learning all the more real for them. Several students came to the 'parenthood teachers' to discuss problems at home even though they were not form or year tutors.

BOX 4.11**Student-teacher relationships**

One parenthood student taught by her maths teacher said 'I look at her differently now. I know she gets it wrong sometimes with her own kids. I didn't even know she had any kids. We get on much better in maths.'

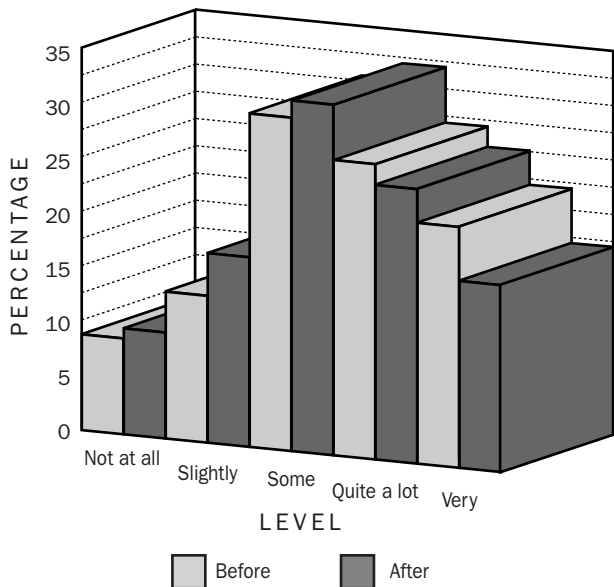
A form tutor who taught parenthood to her own form said 'I found out some sad news about him today. I learned about his difficulties at home, and why he's always so tired. I hadn't heard it before.'

'I want to do the parenthood classes next year. It helps me with all my relationships with the kids – not just the ones that I'm teaching.'

'I've never heard a teacher say they'd made a mistake before. Mrs D says she gets it wrong at home with her kids. That's nice to know really.'

4.15 Interest in learning

How interested are you in learning about parenthood?



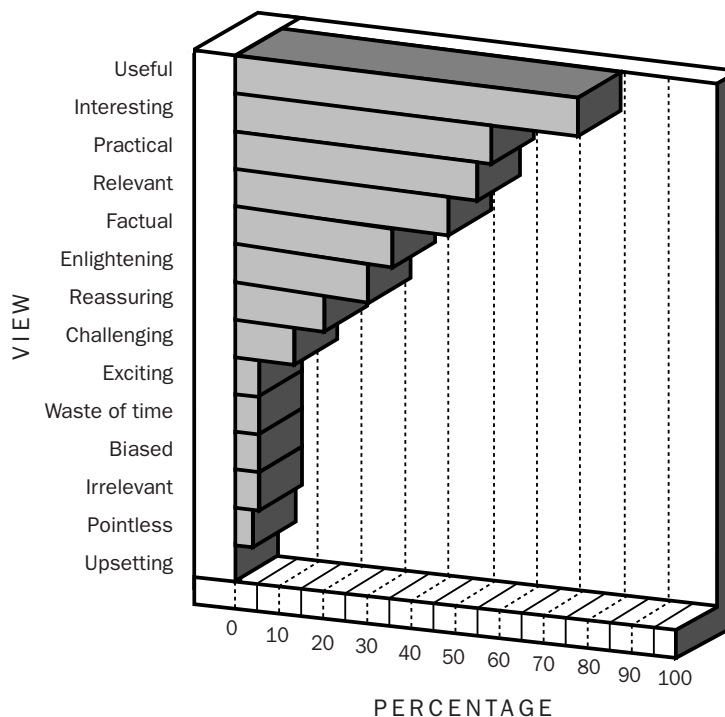
4.7 Developing interest in learning about parenthood

Chart 4.15 shows that positive interest in learning about parenthood among students in general showed little change after their course of study. However, the relative lack of interest in learning about parenthood among male students was reduced. This shows that while the work in schools did not increase the level of interest in learning about parenthood among students generally, it has helped to stimulate more interest among the male students.

Parental interest and support for parenthood education in schools was very apparent. Chart 4.16 shows that most parents believed that the work their child had done at school on parenting had been useful, interesting, practical, and relevant. Around half viewed it as factual and reassuring. Few thought it was upsetting, pointless, irrelevant, biased, or a waste of time.

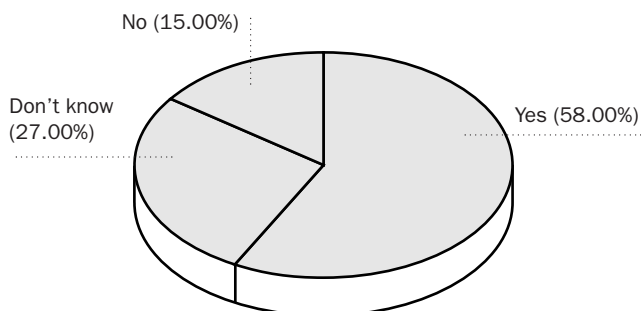
4.16 Value of parenthood education

Parents' views



4.17 Being taught parenthood

Parents wishing they had been taught parenthood at school.

**4.18 Age to teach parenthood**

Parents' views on the age to teach children parenthood.

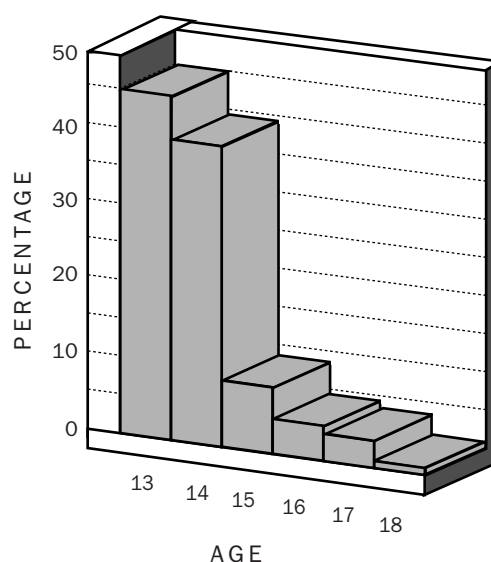


Chart 4.17 shows that over half the parents wished they had been taught parenting at school and Chart 4.18 that most parents thought that parenting should be taught in school beginning at the age of 13 or 14.

The topics that the majority of parents thought students should learn about at school are shown in Box 4.12.

Box 4.12**Parents' priorities for parenthood topics to be taught in school**

Topic	Ranking	%
What makes a happy, safe and healthy home for children	1	82
Conception and pregnancy	2	81
Financial costs of parenting	2	81
What parenthood involves	4	78
Handling difficult situations with children	5	77
Responsibilities of parenting	6	76
How parenthood changes your life	7	75
Where to get advice when you've got a problem	7	75
Community facilities and support for parents	9	72
Child abuse and children's rights	10	71
Resources needed in the home for babies and children	10	71
Motherhood and fatherhood	12	70

Conclusion – the impact of parenthood education on students

The courses of study in parenthood in the participating schools had a positive impact on students' understanding, knowledge, attitudes and skills. In particular, students developed:

- an understanding of what parenthood might mean to them
- an understanding of the responsibilities that parenthood brings
- an awareness that the quality of their future parenting will considerably affect their children's well being
- an understanding of what is expected of parents and the role they may play
- an awareness of the impact of parenthood upon people's lives
- an understanding of the need to be prepared for parenthood
- a knowledge of the skills and qualities that parents require
- an awareness of the need for communication skills
- an awareness of the impact of parenting on relationships
- improved relationships with their parents, their peers and their teachers
- an appreciation of the potential impact of parenthood on their future job prospects and careers
- a greater awareness of their own thoughts and feelings.

Students in general have a positive interest in learning about parenthood. Interest in learning about parenthood increases among male students as a result of their lessons. Parents want to see their children experience parenthood education in school and take an active interest in what their children have been doing and learning about in their parenthood lessons.

SECTION 5 **ACTION TO PROMOTE PARENTHOOD EDUCATION**

5.1 Developing a parenthood syllabus

The value of a curriculum framework, and potentially a syllabus for parenthood, is to give schools a structure within which they can plan their teaching input. The scope and depth of a parenthood curriculum has been demonstrated by the project in several ways.

The participating schools have delivered a wide range of topics connected with parenthood covering all the themes within the original resource materials. They have delivered these topics principally through their PSE timetable, but also occasionally used other subject areas including maths, humanities, RE and science as vehicles for parenthood.

Schools in the project which were already delivering child care modules were able to dovetail that work with the delivery of the parenthood materials. Teachers found that one complemented the other. However the parenthood education project reached whole year groups, whereas childcare was an option only in Year 10, and was largely taken up by female students.

In the absence of a parenthood syllabus the key factors which determined teachers' planning included timetabling issues, class size, teacher availability, methods used within activities (eg groupwork), out-of-school elements and production of material for assessment and recording.

As has been suggested, the central aim of a parenthood syllabus should not be to teach students the practicalities of parent craft such as bathing and feeding babies, child developmental stages or the range of childhood illnesses. Its aim should be to improve students' *understanding* of what being a parent might mean for them to appreciate parenthood as a major life stage and to help them develop the skills to make informed choices about their future role as a parent.

The next stage

On the basis of the project's experience, the next stage would be for appropriate agencies to develop a syllabus for parenthood education in secondary schools that describes key learning objectives, the topics to be covered, attainment targets, methods to be adopted and materials to be used and approaches to the evaluation of the outcomes. This syllabus could be based on the five areas indicated in the project's source materials:

- what it means to be a parent
- what parents need
- parent-child relationships
- rights and responsibilities
- health and development.

Pilot projects in different schools could test out the validity of a complete parenthood syllabus, and arrive at some agreement about the content of future parenthood classes within the context of the National Curriculum. This development could also be designed to take account of the common themes that parenthood education has with other PSE topics.

Accreditation

The suggestion that a student might pass or fail an assessment of their suitability for becoming a parent is naturally a highly controversial one.

While parenthood should be viewed as a privilege and not a right, nearly every individual has the potential and the freedom to become a parent. Society does not prevent individuals from doing so or formally judge their capabilities other than in exceptional circumstances. While child care and nursery nurse qualifications assess an individual's knowledge or suitability for a job that involves looking after children, they are not of course an assessment of their potential for being a parent. To assess students in this way would raise fundamental policy questions about freedom of choice, social engineering and the role of schools.

More practically, an assessment process that results in a judgement about a student's suitability to be a parent could undermine and contradict a process of learning that aims to foster self development and personal growth. The means of assessment used, such as examinations and course work, could 'drive' the educational methods towards the accumulation of a limited set of information and away from the exploration of attitudes and opinions that can be achieved through open debate and discussion. This might be especially problematic for students with special needs.

It is, however, strongly argued by some educationalists that if parenthood education is to gain equivalent status and priority with other subjects within the curriculum then there needs to be a means of acknowledging the work that students have carried out and formally assessing their progress.

One way forward would be to assess the quality of the courses of study being delivered rather than the performance or levels of attainment achieved by the students. This approach would require courses of study in parenthood to be validated and accredited by an external agency. This in turn would require standards to be established for the content, methodology and length of the courses of study. These standards could then be monitored to ensure the delivery of a consistent quality of parenthood education to all students.

Developing parenthood education resources

As a result of the comprehensive testing of the resource materials during the project, it can be concluded that the materials were both useful and relevant to the development of a parenthood syllabus. Some small changes have subsequently been made to the materials and these are detailed in Appendix 7. In addition a revised and extended teachers' guide is being written to accompany the second edition of the resource materials.

5.2 Developing the National Curriculum

As has been said, schools involved in the project were encouraged to deliver parenthood through a number of avenues including PSE, within cross-curricular themes and in single subjects. However, the findings show that teachers found it easiest and most beneficial to site parenthood in the PSE programme. In order for parenthood to become part of every secondary school curriculum it must become one part of the PSE programme or its equivalent.

For other reasons, it also makes sense to locate parenthood education principally within PSE or its equivalent. First, it links with several other 'education for relationships' or citizenship topics including those that consider relationships with peers; with the local and global community; with other cultures; and with the environment.

Second, it has been demonstrated by this project that parenthood education is a topic like other PSE topics which affects students in a very personal way. Some of the most valuable insights have come from engaging with others, both peers and teachers, to explore personal differences. This is, as one teacher described, 'very intensive learning'. Skilled PSE teachers have demonstrated their capacity to work within a curriculum framework, while adapting and developing the material to suit their students.

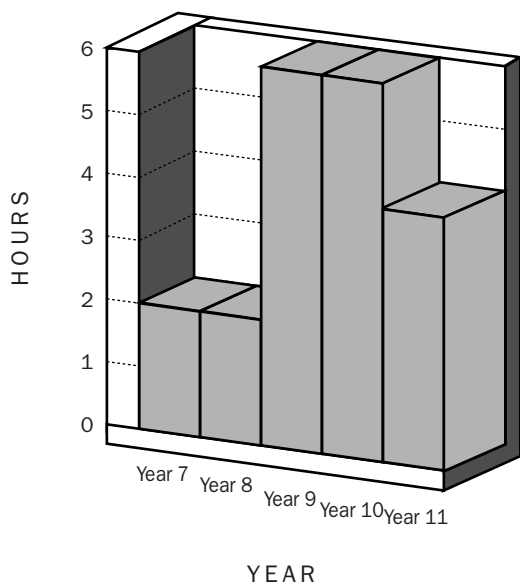
The work done on parenthood in the PSE programme can be supplemented and reinforced by its appearance in other subjects. As discussed in Section 3, teachers in one school developed their approach to parenthood by taking it into maths, science, English and RE. As interest developed in this particular school, teachers not initially involved in the project also began using and adapting the materials.

The relative ease with which this 'escalation' was achieved was due to the strong base for parenthood education within PSE, support from senior members of staff, and a school ethos that welcomed new ideas as well as a will to experiment.

The project has also shown that parenthood education can be reinforced by including it in other elements of the school day, eg collective acts of worship, displays, form discussions, referral to the work in newsletters, parents' evenings, etc. However, this reinforcement was difficult to organise and participating schools had only limited success.

The SCAA is currently considering changes to the National Curriculum to occur after the year 2000. This change might include the addition of a syllabus broadly relating to PSE to be delivered as a mandatory part of the curriculum in every secondary school. Any revision of the National Curriculum could relatively easily incorporate elements of the approach developed in the education for parenthood project.

5.1 Parenthood education entitlement



Student entitlement to parenthood education

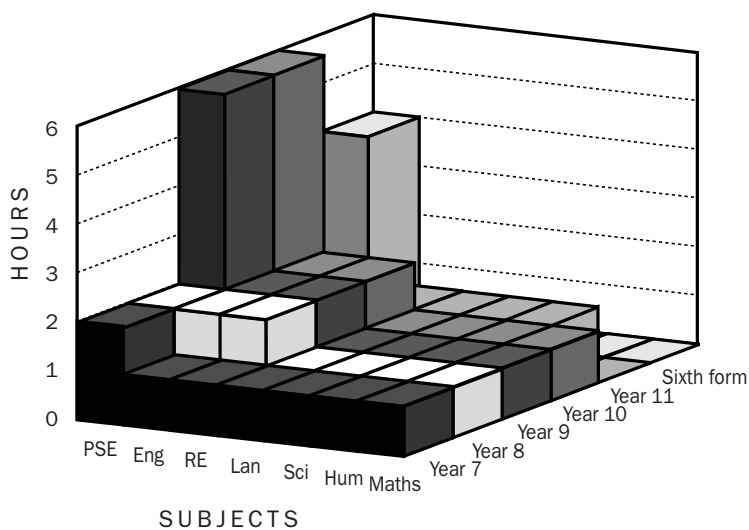
Some schools felt strongly that parenthood should be introduced from the first year of secondary school, beginning with an introduction to the topic in Years 7 and 8, and building to a more substantial programme in Years 9, 10 and 11. Recognising that nearly every student will become a parent at some time in their lives, the teachers felt that parenthood education should, in this way, be an entitlement for every student.

One means of ensuring that all students from Year 7 to 11 receive an entitlement to parenthood education is shown in Chart 5.1. This demonstrates one model through which an entitlement of 20 hours teaching could be realistically delivered as part of the PSE curriculum, or its equivalent, in the five years of compulsory secondary education.

Chart 5.2 illustrates a possible model for the introduction of parenthood across the existing curriculum, thereby expanding the core 20 hour entitlement.

It shows the basic entitlement of 20 hours parenthood education within PSE and how this work could be expanded and linked directly to parenthood activities in other subject areas as a cross-curriculum theme. The experience of the project suggests that education for parenthood can be introduced in every subject area but that it might feature more fully in RE and English.

5.2 Parenthood across the curriculum



The project also demonstrated that sixth form students benefit from a course of study in parenthood and Chart 5.2 includes four hours of parenthood for this age group. This programme might be a sequence of four one-hour sessions, or two two-hour modules or a half-day workshop to provide all students with creative and challenging opportunities to continue to develop their thinking about parenthood.

5.3 Developing local support for parenthood education

LEA policy

The LEA may choose to develop its approach to parenthood education in several ways. In the three LEAs that participated in the project officers hosted a series of workshops on the teaching of parenthood once the project was concluded and invited local headteachers, PSE coordinators, school nurses and other interested staff to attend. This approach gave teachers an opportunity to network with those who had already successfully integrated the topic of parenthood into their curriculum. The opportunity to swap ideas, materials, successes and dilemmas was welcomed by the staff who participated in these workshops.

The involvement of LEA advisers for PSE in this project has meant that the participating schools have had increasing support for their efforts. Furthermore, this may in some instances lead to the adoption of a policy by an LEA towards parenthood education. One of the pilot schools, for example, has already succeeded in incorporating parenthood education into its school policy.

It appears from the experience of the project that some schools will need the added incentive of an area wide policy with carefully considered guidance, particularly at the initial development stage, in order for them to be sufficiently encouraged to include parenthood in their curriculum.

The role of LEA advisers

Some officers of the LEA carry responsibility for PSE in the curriculum and will play a key role in developing a PSE syllabus or its equivalent, its subsequent introduction into the National Curriculum and its implementation at a local level. Regional and national groups of PSE specialists and advisers should be at the forefront of this development and will require information and training on the key aspects of parenthood education.

The role of governing bodies

Governors in the participating schools were generally keen for their school to be involved in the project and pleased about the impact on the students as shown by their comments in Box 5.1. In some cases headteachers took the idea of introducing parenthood into the curriculum to their governing body at an early stage. Other

BOX 5.1**Comments by school governors**

'I was very pleased to see our school developing its approach to all sorts of "human" subjects – parenthood is something they should be thinking about long before it happens to them.'

'I like the idea, although I wouldn't want it to interfere with students' preparation for exams.'

'I would be against it if the teachers were delivering a particular line about what you have to do to be a "good parent".'

governors heard about it much later. No governing body raised any difficulty about the parenthood classes. It is important however, that governors are made aware of changes to the curriculum. Significant changes to the PSE curriculum, particularly in the light of any recommendations made by the SCAA, will require governors to consider the length, content and methodology of the PSE curriculum in their own school and, as appropriate, to determine the policy.

Other organisations and networks

Many of the activities which the teachers used in schools have the potential to be adapted for work in youth and community projects as shown by the experience of the after school club in one of the pilot schools. The project has demonstrated that as a theme for young people to consider, it can capture their interest. Parenthood as a theme also has the potential to inspire a variety of artistic and dramatic activities outside the classroom in informal educational settings and through peer-led groups. Using a more informal approach, youth and community workers can encourage young people to consider the implications of becoming parents.

Teacher training support

Teachers participating in the project often commented that they hadn't realised how much there was to consider within the topic of parenthood. If teachers are to be encouraged from the start of their careers to consider parenthood as a potential focus for a specialised subject, and to develop confidence in delivering parenthood as part of PSE, then this must be recognised in practical terms during their training.

Teacher training colleges can include education for parenthood in several ways:

- using it as a topic when demonstrating and practising teaching skills
- introducing parenting as one of the issues that teachers will need to be aware of in the pastoral setting
- examining parenting as a factor which affects children's abilities to learn
- using the parenthood curriculum to develop skills in writing lesson plans, mounting displays, leading collective acts of worship and other school activities.

Training for established teachers on the delivery and importance of parenthood is clearly required if parenthood is to be taught effectively throughout the school. This can be provided through INSET days and off-site events facilitated by the staff themselves, LEA advisory teachers or, exceptionally, by external consultants.

During the life of this project teachers received training from project personnel, both off-site and at school. This training included an examination of the curriculum, activities and methods appropriate to parenthood, the dilemmas associated with teaching parenthood, and the planning and evaluation of their

own work. Teachers also devised various methods for introducing the parenthood schemes of work and materials to their colleagues.

Opportunities for training will inevitably be limited in schools, but materials and advice will be available as a result of this project to maximise INSET opportunities where parenthood is to be the main focus.

CONCLUSIONS

The impact of parenthood education on students

- 1 Parenthood education in the five pilot schools had a measurable, positive impact on the majority of students' knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes towards parenting. The majority of students gained a knowledge and understanding of the responsibilities that parenthood brings and the need to be prepared for it. They became more aware of the various skills and qualities that parents require, and the impact that parenthood will have on their relationships and future prospects and careers.
- 2 As a result of their work, more students felt prepared to become a parent and to be responsible for looking after a child. Changes in students' attitudes on a number of key areas resulted from the work:
 - more identified parenthood as expressing joint love and being a part of a family
 - more thought they would become a parent at an older age
 - there was a greater appreciation among students of the higher impact that parenthood would have on how they spend their time
 - more students identified as important the parenting skills of 'reading to your children', 'asking others for support' and 'coping with crying'.
- 3 Students improved their own communication skills, sometimes developed specific parenting skills and improved their relationships with their parents, their peers and their teachers. Many students became more aware of themselves and their own thoughts and feelings.
- 4 Students in Years 9 to 11 (13 to 16 year-olds) were most responsive to the content and style of delivery of the project. Sixth form students require activities and projects that challenge their academic abilities as well as their attitudes.
- 5 Male students were less interested and generally less responsive to parenthood education than female students. However, male students showed greater interest in and responsiveness to learning about parenthood as a result of the work.
- 6 There were few differences in interest or response among students of different ethnic origins to the content and style of the project. The material generally was seen to be relevant and appropriate to a wide range of cultures and religions.
- 7 Parents viewed their child's parenthood lessons in schools as useful, interesting, practical and relevant, and wished they had themselves received parenthood education at school.
- 8 Concern was expressed that parenthood education may be a distraction from GCSE success in Year 11. However, evidence from elsewhere suggests that effective PSE which would incorporate parenthood education, may enhance students' academic performance.

Location of parenthood education in the school curriculum

- 9 The successful introduction of parenthood education in all schools will rely upon the extent to which parenthood becomes a major element of PSE; and the extent to which PSE, or its equivalent, is given a statutory place within the National Curriculum.
- 10 Delivering parenthood education as an option in the curriculum is not an appropriate way forward. It will not be attractive to students faced with apparently more exciting alternatives from which to choose. Nor is it likely to be the choice of students expected to pursue academic courses and is likely to attract female rather than male students.
- 11 Some elements of parenthood can be taught successfully as topics within RE. However, the experience of the project suggests that this is not an appropriate subject within the National Curriculum in which to locate parenthood education.
- 12 Parenthood is a subject that lends itself to application across a range of subject areas and could be developed as a cross-curricular theme. However, this approach is likely to succeed in only a few schools where a particular combination of circumstances exists relating to school management, staff structures and curriculum planning and organisation.

Differentiation for age and ability

- 13 Parenthood education can be successfully taught to students in Years 9, 10 and 11 (13 to 16 year-olds) all of whom demonstrate their capacity to learn, enjoy and benefit from the course of study.
- 14 However, parenthood can only be effectively delivered to Years 9, 10, and 11 if teachers are skilled and confident enough to use a participative, open and facilitative style. Teaching sixth form students will also be successful if these skills are employed, together with a challenging and rigorous approach using appropriately targeted and delivered materials.

Schemes of work

- 15 A six-week module on parenthood education within PSE or its equivalent is the optimum model to deliver an effective scheme of work for students in Years 9 and 10. Shorter schemes of work to introduce the subject would be more appropriate in Years 7 and 8, and a shorter scheme of work is appropriate in Year 11 when pressure of time on the curriculum is greatest.
- 16 Work outside the classroom is successful in raising students' awareness of wider issues such as the cost of parenting and the resources available to meet parents' needs, and in developing students' wider communication and

information technology skills. Community activities require good planning and organisation if standard class sizes are involved.

- 17 Parenthood education activities outside the classroom such as assemblies and displays have most impact if they take place in the context of a scheme of work within the classroom.
- 18 The introduction of parenthood education may be of interest to the local media. This can be used to reinforce learning and provide additional experiences for the students. It can benefit the school and the teachers, although the nature of the media coverage and its impact upon the school clearly needs to be properly managed.

Teaching skills and methods

- 19 Successful teaching of parenthood education requires staff who:
 - adopt a participative and facilitative style of teaching
 - have good groupwork and facilitation skills
 - have experience of and an aptitude for teaching PSE
 - have high levels of motivation and enthusiasm
 - appreciate and reinforce the value of learning through high quality discussion and debate
 - challenge students' views to ensure alternatives are explored without imposing a single viewpoint of their own
 - are open to change within themselves
 - have chosen to teach the topic
 - are prepared to disclose personal experiences where appropriate
 - have support within the school for preparing and teaching the subject
 - use mixed and single sex groupings for different activities
 - adapt materials and activities to suit different abilities
 - are flexible in the timing and pace of activities to respond to the enthusiasm and learning abilities of the students.
 - develop a sound understanding of the appropriate resource materials and methods over time through initial and in-service training and from the repeated practice of teaching parenthood education in different settings and with differing groups of students.
- 20 Parenthood should not be taught by staff who have no experience of or aptitude for delivering PSE, do not have group work skills, have been compelled to teach the subject, who wish to impose their views about parenting on students or who have no support from senior colleagues or time to be properly prepared.

School and classroom organisation

- 21 Parenthood education is taught most effectively when a specialist approach is used. Several models of specialism have been demonstrated to be successful. Whichever way is chosen, students require skilled and enthusiastic teachers if education for parenthood is to be taught effectively.
- 22 Parenthood can be taught effectively in mixed and single gender groups depending on the topic under discussion.
- 23 Teachers need to be aware before starting a lesson of the potential for personal and sensitive issues to arise, to have the skills to deal with them and to know where to turn for support if further action is required.
- 24 Flexibility is important in responding to student enthusiasm and ability, and it is better to underestimate rather than overestimate the time parenthood activities and discussions are likely to take. There is a need to develop lessons in parenthood that could be taught as 'stop-gaps' by a teacher covering for a colleague's absence.
- 25 It is useful to encourage students to reflect on what they have learned and how they may have developed as a result of the lessons through before-and-after questionnaires, and through assessing course work. The nature and quantity of work undertaken could be usefully recorded in a portfolio system of certification. Assessment leading to a qualification poses significant difficulties and requires further consideration.

School management

- 26 The successful introduction and delivery of parenthood education requires active support from senior staff, as well as the headteacher and the governing body.
- 27 For parenthood education to be successful, PSE or its equivalent must be valued and given priority as a core subject in the school curriculum. It is important to reinforce parenthood education themes in other curriculum areas and encourage staff to communicate and work across departments. Timetabling is a key indicator of the importance and priority attached to the subject.
- 28 Staff delivering PSE and parenthood education feel most supported and motivated when they have some influence, control and involvement in the timetabling discussions about the school timetable and their own area of work.

Other issues

- 29 Training on parenthood education can be provided during school INSET days. LEAs can give very real and practical support to the introduction of parenthood education in schools through organising half-day seminars for teachers and other professionals in their area.
- 30 Colleges, schools and other institutions involved with initial teacher training need to include parenthood education topics and teaching methods into their teacher training curriculum.
- 31 The Children's Society's *Education for Parenthood* pack is an effective, useful and accessible resource for teaching parenthood education in schools. The materials can be successfully used with all students aged 13 to 17, with some adaptation needed for younger and older groups, and students of different abilities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Developing a parenthood syllabus

- 1 The SCAA should establish a pilot scheme to develop a comprehensive parenthood syllabus and programme of study for 11 to 13 year-olds and 14 to 16 year-olds. The syllabus should be based upon the values of caring for children and the importance of relationships, avoid promoting a single model of family structures or cultures, and be structured around five main themes:
 - what it means to be a parent
 - what parents need
 - parent-child relationships
 - rights and responsibilities
 - health and development.
- 2 The SCAA should investigate further the accreditation and validation of courses of study in parenthood.

Developing a statutory entitlement to parenthood education

- 3 The SCAA should subsequently aim to give a statutory entitlement of 20 hours parenthood education for all 11 to 16 year-old students during their period of compulsory secondary education. In addition, all sixth form students should have the opportunity to undertake at least four hours of parenthood education.
- 4 The SCAA should incorporate parenthood education as a key subject within the PSE curriculum or its equivalent. It should also seek to give statutory status to PSE, or its equivalent, within the National Curriculum.
- 5 Universities, education authorities, teacher training colleges, professional networks, curriculum bodies and other relevant agencies should identify the contribution they can make to developing parenthood as a core component of the National Curriculum.
- 6 OFSTED inspections should include an assessment of parenthood education within the PSE curriculum.

Developing parenthood education resource materials

- 7 The second edition of the *Education for Parenthood* resource pack should be updated and revised by the Children's Society to include an extended teachers' guide bringing together the lessons from the project.

APPENDIX 1 **EVALUATION AREAS AND WRITTEN INSTRUMENTS**

I Specific areas assessed included:

Students

- understanding of what being a parent might mean
- appreciation of parenthood as a major life stage
- knowledge of the choices, responsibilities and skills that parenting involves
- self confidence in relationships, the ability to think for themselves and the ability to handle conflicts at home
- motivation to learn
- relevance and practicality of the pack and each parenthood education activity.

Parents

- understanding of their children's views on parenting and the impact this has on their relationships with them
- development of their own attitudes and approaches to parenting as a result of their children's work in and out of school
- attitudes to teaching parenthood as part of the school curriculum
- relevance and practicality of the pack and each parenthood education activity.

Teachers

- teaching methods and classroom/groupwork skills
- relationships with the students
- knowledge and understanding of parenting
- approaches to curriculum planning, classroom preparation and implementation
- approaches to introducing parenthood into the school curriculum
- providing support, training and resources about parenting to their peers
- relevance and practicality of the pack and each parenthood education activity.

Schools

- approaches to planning and implementing change formally and informally within and across the curriculum as a whole
- developing the PSE curriculum within the school and developing ways of implementing cross-curricular themes
- whole school policies in other related areas of the curriculum such as collective acts of worship, open evenings and school events
- ways the school relates to parents of the students including home/school activities and parents' evenings
- relevance and practicality of the pack and each parenthood education activity.

Training and support

- training to prepare teachers to implement parenthood education
- support for teachers while implementing the curriculum
- feedback and formative evaluation processes
- relevance and practicality of the pack and each parenthood education activity
- the way the evaluation was conducted.

II Written instruments

The written instruments used to collect information are indicated in the appendices and are:

- students' logbook
- teachers' logbook
- student pre-course and post-course questionnaires (identical)
- parent questionnaire.

The data

This appendix summarises the data gathered through the two questionnaires completed by students before and after their course of study. All figures are in percentages unless otherwise shown. The data in each table describes the response rates of students overall to the questions. The comparisons made are between the findings in each set of data overall and not between the replies of individual students. Comments on the comparison between student responses before and after the course of study along with statistically significant variations in the responses between different types of students are described in the main body of the report.

The sample

Students who completed the first questionnaire went on to complete the second questionnaire. A small number of students in one school completed the second questionnaire only but it is felt this does not affect the validity of any comparisons. The question of which student completed the questionnaires was the result of different teachers putting different amounts of pressure on students to do the task, the time allowed in the classroom to complete the questionnaires, and variations in student attendance at lessons at the beginning and the end of the courses of study. In this sense, the student population sample in each set of data is random. However, these factors do mean that there is a difference between the two sets of data in the gender balance (a higher percentage of males in the second set), the age balance (a higher percentage of pupils in the older age groups in the second set) and the school balance. Where these differences in the population are felt to have had an effect on the comparisons, this is referred to in the report.

APPENDIX 2 STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

Section 1 The profile of the students

Table 1 Gender of the students

	<i>Before</i>		<i>After</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
Male	263	50	200	58
Female	266	50	145	42
Total	529	100	345	100

Table 2 School

	<i>Before</i>		<i>After</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
Cardinal Langley	129	24	98	27
Falange Park	119	22	60	16
Littlemoss	70	13	95	26
Mossley Hollins	90	17	48	13
North Chadderton	128	24	62	17
Total	536	100	363	100

Table 3 Student age group

	<i>Before %</i>	<i>After %</i>
13	15	10
14	39	28
15	24	41
16	17	11
17+	5	10
Total	100	100

Table 4 Family structure of students

	<i>Before %</i>	<i>After %</i>
Lone parent	23	24
Siblings	84	84
Extended	4	5
Step-parent(s)	8	9

Table 5 Student ethnic origin

	<i>Before %</i>	<i>After %</i>
White	82	84
Black	1	1
Asian	15	14
Other	2	1
Total	100	100

Section II Student views about parenthood

Table 6 Students feeling prepared for parenthood

	<i>Before %</i>	<i>After %</i>
Not prepared at all	28	15
	27	24
	31	36
	10	21
Completely prepared	4	4
Total	100	100

Table 7 Student interest in learning about parenthood

	<i>Before %</i>	<i>After %</i>
Not interested at all	8	9
	13	17
	30	32
	27	25
Very interested indeed	22	17
Total	100	100

Table 8 What it means to students to be a parent

	<i>Before %</i>	<i>After %</i>
Being part of a family	65	70
Loving someone	63	65
A major change in my life	63	61
Creating a new life	59	59
Looking after someone	58	57
Being grown up	40	39
Expressing joint love	32	44
Having less money	20	21
Continuing the family line	18	16
Being in my own home	16	12
Being restricted	13	13
Being second	11	16
Having less fun	11	8
Having more money	7	5
Having new horizons	7	6
Controlling someone else	6	3
Being right all the time	4	3
Having more status	2	2

Table 9 Age students expect to first become a parent

	<i>Before %</i>	<i>After %</i>
under 16	0	0
16 to 18	4	4
19 to 21	18	18
22 to 25	51	47
26-30	24	29
over 30	2	2
Total	100	100

Table 10 Number of children students expect to have

	<i>Before %</i>	<i>After %</i>
none	2	3
1	14	12
2	60	62
3	13	13
4	6	5
4+	5	4
Total	100	100

Table 11 Gender of children wanted

	<i>Before %</i>	<i>After %</i>
Girls only	4	2
Boys only	9	13
A mix of both	46	49
Don't mind	41	36
Total	100	100

Table 12 Student expectations about who will make decisions

	<i>Before %</i>	<i>After %</i>
You	9	6
Your partner	4	6
You and your partner jointly	86	87
Someone else	1	2
Total	100	100

Table 13 Student expectations about who will do practical work

	<i>Before %</i>	<i>After %</i>
You	17	16
Your partner	16	22
You and your partner jointly	66	62
Someone else	1	2
Total	100	100

Table 14 Student views of impact on spending their time

	<i>Before %</i>	<i>After %</i>
No impact at all	1	2
	4	3
	26	23
	35	31
Very high impact	33	41
Total	100	100

Table 15 Student views on the impact on spending their money

	<i>Before %</i>	<i>After %</i>
No impact at all	1	2
	3	4
	19	18
	40	43
Very high impact	36	32
Total	100	100

Table 16 Student views on the impact on having a full-time job

	<i>Before %</i>	<i>After %</i>
No impact at all	6	4
	10	11
	26	26
	27	29
Very high impact	30	29
Total	100	100

Table 17 Student views on the impact of going to college or university

	<i>Before %</i>	<i>After %</i>
No impact at all	11	9
	11	12
	22	26
	25	24
Very high impact	30	29
Total	100	100

Table 18 Student priorities of parenting skills

	<i>Before %</i>	<i>After %</i>
%		
Teach good manners	73	68
Have the energy not to smack	65	59
Choose healthy food	56	45
Plan spending	52	51
Cope with crying	51	53
Resolve conflicts	41	43
Be fair	39	36
Prevent harm	39	37
Play well	35	39
Have respect for self and others	31	31
Ask for support	31	39
Read to children	29	41
Child looks smart and attractive	21	20
Buy the right toys	19	22
Change nappy quickly	5	7
Choose suitable clothes	3	4

APPENDIX 3 STUDENT COMMENTS ABOUT THE PARENTHOOD LESSONS

A number of students made written comments on their parenthood lessons and gave a score on how much they felt the sessions had changed their views or opinions about parenthood.

Scores

<i>Not changed at all</i>				<i>Changed a great deal</i>
1	2	3	4	5
96	158	199	128	50

Comments

General understanding

- 'Looked at parenthood from a wider angle.'
- 'It makes you look at parenthood in a different way.'
- 'I learned more and more every week.'
- 'I learned a lot of things that are usually untold about parenthood.'
- 'It changed my views a lot because nobody ever tells you what it's all about.'
- 'I found out some things I never knew about parenthood.'
- 'I didn't think there was so much stuff to think about.'
- 'There was a few points which I had not viewed before and now that I have my views have changed a little.'
- 'I learned more about if I really want to be a parent.'
- 'It has shown me that parenting is not a piece of cake.'
- 'I didn't know all the facts.'
- 'Parental contact is so important.'
- 'It was great fun [learning about parenthood].'
- 'It shows how different every parent is.'
- 'It made me clearer about how I'd like to be as a parent.'
- 'I know more than I should do.'
- 'I would love to become a parent and this has just made me want it even more (a male student).'

Self awareness

- 'I've discovered why people think of me in completely different ways.'
- 'I want to be a parent so I can have a reason to be responsible.'
- 'It hasn't really changed anything but I feel more confident about myself.'
- 'I found some of my ideas about parenting were unrealistic.'
- 'I have been asked things I wouldn't usually think of and it has made me realise.'
- 'I now know I am not ready to become a parent. It will make a great change in my life, I will have a lot of responsibilities and a lot of choices to make.'

- 'I still don't want children but this has made me think and maybe I'll change my mind in the future.'
- 'I feel more confident about myself.'
- 'I didn't enjoy it much – I already have a kind of parental role.'

Being prepared

- 'Made me realise how prepared I should be before having a family.'
- 'It has shown me that I will need to be prepared.'
- 'I have learned more about if I want to be a parent.'
- 'I learned that you have to plan a baby, be prepared.'
- 'I still feel I want to be a parent and all my views are the same.'
- 'I know how I am going to handle life when I have children.'
- 'My opinion hasn't changed a lot because I think I have quite a mature attitude to parenthood already.'
- 'It's made a difference to whether I get pregnant or not, you're stopping to think.'
- 'I've not changed because I am too young to be thinking about kids. I am still only a kid more or less!'
- 'I didn't really bother that much until I really understood it.'

Parenting skills and qualities

- 'It gave me some sensible advice about being a parent.'
- 'I know you can't do some things in front of your child because they mimic you.'
- 'We learned how much time and love children need'
- 'I have changed my views on how to deal with children.'
- 'It has taught me how children behave and how to handle it without using force, that it takes understanding, loving and patience, which are the main things to be a parent.'
- 'I am more aware of what qualities are needed to be a parent.'
- 'It showed how a parent's behaviour changes a child's life.'
- 'At the beginning I thought the only way to solve a child's problem of being naughty was to hit them, but now I realise talking it over with them will be better.'
- 'I'd think twice about smacking a child.'
- 'I've learned not to hit children.'
- 'I now know how not to make my child spoilt and selfish.'
- 'I have learned to talk matters over.'
- 'Parents should trust and respect their children.'
- 'You don't want to be smacking a kid every time it does anything.'

Rights and responsibilities

- 'We learned at what age you can do things.'
- 'I still think it would be a big responsibility.'

- 'It has helped me realise it isn't easy bringing up a kid. I have learned a great deal in wrongs and rights.'
- 'It has shown me that parenting is not a piece of cake and about all the things it involves'
- 'Lots of different thing might happen.'
- 'I'm starting to think it's too much like hard work for me.'
- 'Having a child takes a lot of responsibility.'
- 'Because you think a lot more about your child than you, and you know you can't go by what you want to do and when you want to do it.'
- 'Made me more aware and more responsible.'
- 'Now I've realised what's involved in being a parent is a lot harder than I thought.'
- 'I thought parenting would be good and easy but now I know it's hard and how much money it takes.'
- 'I never realised how much it takes to be a parent and how time consuming it can be.'
- 'It has made me realise that it's not just about loving and caring – major responsibilities are involved.'
- 'There are two sides to being a parent – one side taking the baby out and showing it off, and the other side being there when it needs feeding, a nappy changing and when it is screaming most of the day and night.'
- 'I already thought about it with my mates, like how we would treat our kid, ie play football with them in the park.'
- 'I'm not responsible enough to look after a child.'
- 'I've found out what actions will bring what consequences.'

Relationships

- 'It was about divorce not parenting.'
- 'Changed my mind about young people having a baby because it just changes your relationship.'
- 'I also know a committed and stable relationship is essential.'
- 'It shows how important the rest of the family is'
- 'It's made me think really hard about my family.'
- 'In my family my mum has left and I see the difference on the kids, when my dad got a new girlfriend she has three kids so that's six kids so I see the lot.'
- 'I can now see the need for an extended family.'

Future prospects and careers

- 'It told us what happened to some people who started a family at the wrong time.'
- 'Thought about effects on my university course and job.'
- 'The stories made me think about my future.'
- 'I have set my heart on being a father, however, I need to give myself time to enjoy myself and live a little.'

- 'It made me think about all the compromises that I would have to make and all the changes that a child could make to my life.'
- 'I have thought about the effects of a college course.'
- 'If you don't treat yourself good you won't treat your kids good.'

Comments that were critical

- 'I still have the same views.'
- 'I didn't learn much.'
- 'This was not about me or what I thought.'
- 'This was only a play and not for real.'
- 'There wasn't really anything to change my mind about anything.'
- 'A questionnaire does not change your mind.'
- 'We only looked at our own views on this and didn't get what was meant to be the best.'
- 'I did not bother about being a parent.'
- 'It hasn't changed my opinion about parenthood.'
- 'I didn't learn anything I didn't know so I feel this course has been a waste of time.'
- 'It was boring.'
- 'I don't think we learned much because all we did was write our own ideas of what makes a good parent.'
- 'It was just the activity sheets where you had to answer questions so it did not change my point of view.'
- 'Sticking and cutting is boring.'

APPENDIX 4 **TEACHER COMMENTS ON THE LESSONS**

The teachers were asked to record their views about the lessons and the impact they had on the students in a logbook. They also gave an overall rating for their lessons. These are the findings from 39 lessons in parenthood to Year 9, 10 and 12 students in two different schools delivered by four different teachers.

Lesson ratings

☹	1	2	3	4	5	6	☺
	1	8	17	33	27	11	

Teacher comments

Work with Year 12 students

Small group discussion

- ‘They became absorbed by the activity – discussed well in groups without realising they had been.’
- ‘Discussed better in small groups.’
- ‘Heated debate around picture arrangement.’
- ‘Discussion good – lots of points raised – challenges/ concerns, etc.’
- ‘Lots of noisy discussion. Some took this seriously, not all.’
- ‘Listened well to other views.’
- ‘Difficult to get ideas for the “brainstorm”.’
- ‘Group liked lively discussion – lots of ideas on qualities (of a parent).’

Timing

- ‘Took more time than expected.’
- ‘Lesson could have been developed with more time – many other issues raised.’

Activity

- ‘Didn’t like cutting and sticking pictures.’
- ‘I went off on a different track to the lesson plan. I think this lesson could be developed in a lot more detail and contain much more material.’
- ‘Statistics outdated.’
- ‘Motion too definite – all thought responsibility should be shared so found it difficult to discuss. However, argued very well – lots of good points raised.’
- ‘Accepted questionnaire as stimulus rather than accurate.’

Learning

- ‘Got more out of the lesson than they realised’.
- ‘Students related to their own experiences and were able to assess what was “good” or “bad”.’

Community activities with Year 12 students

- 'Pupils very keen and interested. Worked well as a group – full of ideas – willing to talk'
- 'Pupils keen and raring to go.'
- 'Very excited at going out of school. Made excellent use of time and brought back some valuable observations.'
- 'Got a lot of valuable communication skills across as pupils worked in pairs going around the shops making observations.'
- 'Shy pupils beginning to talk more. Comment from one: "I feel happy at the end of this lesson".'
- 'Pupils want to get out on the visit but are finding the planning difficult.'
- 'Enjoyed making posters to convey last week's findings.'
- 'Worked quite well in my absence – produced a questionnaire on the computer to take into town centre next lesson.'
- 'Rather embarrassed at having to stop people and ask them to complete questionnaires. After a while their confidence grew and they became quite talkative. This task gave the pupils some valuable communication skills.'

Year 9 and 10*General comments*

- 'Excellent lesson – well behaved, worked extremely well. No really silly incidents, some very thoughtful answers.'
- 'An extremely good lesson. Pupils thought through some of their ideas really well.'
- 'Class did this lesson very well indeed. I asked them to imagine they were a social worker who was interviewing prospective parents. They were to draw up in pairs a contract showing the things they would expect a parent to have. Well done. Generally took it very seriously and contributed well.'

Small groups

- 'The atmosphere improved when they started discussing the questions. As time went by they got more and more interested in arguing about the questions.'
- 'Pupils very enthusiastic about role play.'
- 'Brilliant! They put across a very accurate picture of how chaotic it can be.'
- 'This was an excellent lesson – one of my best PSE lessons ever. Every pupil was on task, relevant heated discussions taking place right up to the bell.'
- 'Class discussion was fruitful once you got them to stop shouting out. Many had clear ideas about what they wanted.'
- 'Felt this was a very good lesson which the pupils seem to enjoy and get a lot out of discussion.'
- 'Difficult to settle down initially. Some groups worked extremely well. Chose own groups – tended to fall into boy / girl. Were prepared to discuss their ideas – girls taking it generally more seriously than the boys.'

- 'This was one of the best lessons so far. The pupils took the whole exercise very seriously and worked together without disruption.'
- 'Excellent. I chose the groups – there was a mixture of male/female. I was extremely pleased with their response and feel that most pupils gained something from this lesson.'

Timing and size

- 'A good lesson though groups of five or six proved too large for small group work.'
- 'Important to stress need for groups of 25 maximum to work effectively – also need room too to spread out.'
- 'We consistently over-run, and ended up with a poor round-up: another constraint of the imposed carousel system.'
- 'They had lots of ideas but shortage of time necessarily cut down on discussion.'
- 'Seriously, time was a factor. Did not manage to complete all that was on the sheet.'
- 'Lack of time meant did not discuss all the relevant questions. Working in groups made it more difficult to police.'
- 'Pupils participated very well and completed the task in hand.'

Classroom activities

- 'Brilliant. They were very intuitive about each other's behaviour.'
- 'Deep discussion about role of violence – some very thoughtful answers. Discussion became about how they were themselves behaved and expected to be treated. Saw the teachers who didn't shout and use verbal threats as soft. Question: Why should teacher be blamed for the behaviour of pupils? Made some of them think about own behaviour!'
- 'Some groups found it hard to reach a consensus opinion.'
- 'Again their ideas and their experiences made some question their own home life.'
- 'It raised issues such as boys staying at home to look after babies.'
- 'I was very impressed with the contracts they drew up.'
- 'Maturity of the group varied. Some gave assured answers, for others it was above their heads.'
- 'Generally the exercises were well received and enthusiastically completed but I feel an ongoing programme through Years 9, 10 and 11 will eventually be more beneficial and hopefully have a greater effect on the future thinking of our pupils.'

Learning

- 'The pupils in the main were helpful and supportive of one another and generally keen to complete the work.'
- 'Was constantly surprised by their keenness.'

- 'They were quiet and well behaved, but I'm not sure that was really my objective.'
- 'Students answered enthusiastically and were very interested in finding out what the definition was [of parenthood]. They worked hard and produced some interesting discussions.'

Difficulties

- 'Many worked well but boys very silly.'
- 'Disappointed with their level of interest. Mixed sex and ability groups. Some gained something, many were disinterested.'
- 'General lack of interest in lesson.'
- 'Needed longer.'

APPENDIX 5 PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

Summary

The responses from 79 parents of students taking part in the study showed:

- Two-thirds of the parents responding were from one school – Cardinal Langley.
- Two schools had no questionnaires returned by parents.
- The parents replying were predominantly white.
- Over half the parents wish they had been taught parenting at school.
- Most parents think that parenting should be taught at the age of 13 or 14.
- Most parents believe that the work their child has done at school on parenting has been useful, interesting, practical, and relevant. Around half viewed it as factual and reassuring. Very few indeed thought it was upsetting, pointless, irrelevant, biased, or a waste of time.
- A substantial majority of parents believed the work on parenthood has had an impact on their child’s views about parenting.
- A substantial majority felt it had an impact on their relationship with their child and on their own views and actions as a parent.
- The topics that 70% or more parents thought students should learn about at school were:

<i>Topic</i>	<i>Ranking</i>	<i>%</i>
What makes a happy, safe and healthy home for children	1	82
Conception and pregnancy	2	81
Financial costs of parenting	2	81
What parenthood involves	4	78
Handling difficult situations with children	5	77
Responsibilities of parenting	6	76
How parenthood changes your life	7	75
Where to get advice when you’ve got a problem	7	75
Community facilities and support for parents	9	72
Child abuse and children’s rights	10	71
Resources needed in the home for babies and children	10	71
Motherhood and fatherhood	12	70

The data

Section 1 About you

A total of 79 parents completed and returned the questionnaire they were given.

Male 19% Female 66% Unknown 15%

3 School your son or daughter attends

Falinge Park	<input type="checkbox"/>	0	0
North Chadderton	<input type="checkbox"/>	0	0
Mossley Hollins	<input type="checkbox"/>	21	27%
Littlemoss	<input type="checkbox"/>	6	8%
Cardinal Langley	<input type="checkbox"/>	52	65%
Total		79	100%

4 How would you describe your racial origin?

White	<input type="checkbox"/>	95%
Black	<input type="checkbox"/>	1%
Asian	<input type="checkbox"/>	3%
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	1%

Please specify

5 Do you wish you had been taught parenting at school?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	58%
Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>	27%
No	<input type="checkbox"/>	15%

6 I would/would not* like to be interviewed on the telephone about my views.

Section 2 Parenting and school

1 At what age do you think it would be best to introduce parenting at school?

13	<input type="checkbox"/>	45%
14	<input type="checkbox"/>	39%
15	<input type="checkbox"/>	8%
16	<input type="checkbox"/>	4%
17	<input type="checkbox"/>	3%
18	<input type="checkbox"/>	1%

2 Which of the topics below do you think students should learn about at school and which do you think your son or daughter has covered this year?

<i>Topic</i>	<i>Should be taught at school</i>	<i>Has been taught at school</i>
What it means to be a parent		
What parenthood involves	<input type="checkbox"/> 78%	<input type="checkbox"/> 61%
How parenthood changes your life	<input type="checkbox"/> 75%	<input type="checkbox"/> 53%
Family structures today and in the past	<input type="checkbox"/> 66%	<input type="checkbox"/> 21%
Why people become parents	<input type="checkbox"/> 58%	<input type="checkbox"/> 40%
How children relate to other relatives and adults	<input type="checkbox"/> 56%	<input type="checkbox"/> 29%
Celebrating the birth of a child in different cultures	<input type="checkbox"/> 48%	<input type="checkbox"/> 13%
What parents need		
Financial costs of parenting	<input type="checkbox"/> 81%	<input type="checkbox"/> 35%
Where to get advice when you've got a problem	<input type="checkbox"/> 75%	<input type="checkbox"/> 23%
Community facilities and support for parents	<input type="checkbox"/> 72%	<input type="checkbox"/> 13%
Resources needed in the home for babies and children	<input type="checkbox"/> 71%	<input type="checkbox"/> 25%
Financial support for parents	<input type="checkbox"/> 63%	<input type="checkbox"/> 16%
Parent-child relationships		
Handling difficult situations with children	<input type="checkbox"/> 77%	<input type="checkbox"/> 29%
Motherhood and fatherhood	<input type="checkbox"/> 70%	<input type="checkbox"/> 33%
Love, commitment and emotional bonds between parents and children	<input type="checkbox"/> 68%	<input type="checkbox"/> 48%
How children respond to the different ways that parents treat them	<input type="checkbox"/> 68%	<input type="checkbox"/> 51%
Everyday skills and qualities needed for looking after children	<input type="checkbox"/> 68%	<input type="checkbox"/> 34%
Separation between parents and children	<input type="checkbox"/> 68%	<input type="checkbox"/> 25%
Rights and responsibilities		
Responsibilities of parenting	<input type="checkbox"/> 76%	<input type="checkbox"/> 53%
Child abuse and children's rights	<input type="checkbox"/> 71%	<input type="checkbox"/> 43%
Parent action to protect children's welfare	<input type="checkbox"/> 65%	<input type="checkbox"/> 19%
Parental consent	<input type="checkbox"/> 61%	<input type="checkbox"/> 18%
Marriage and parenting 'contracts' in different religions	<input type="checkbox"/> 49%	<input type="checkbox"/> 21%
Health and development		
What makes a happy, safe and healthy home for children	<input type="checkbox"/> 82%	<input type="checkbox"/> 38%
Conception and pregnancy	<input type="checkbox"/> 81%	<input type="checkbox"/> 39%
Child development	<input type="checkbox"/> 71%	<input type="checkbox"/> 25%
Enjoying your children	<input type="checkbox"/> 66%	<input type="checkbox"/> 24%
Play and children's development	<input type="checkbox"/> 59%	<input type="checkbox"/> 24%

3 Circle 5 words or phrases that reflect your views about the work your son or daughter has done:

Biased 4%	Irrelevant 4%	Pointless 3%	Useful 83%
Challenging 21%	Exciting 4%	Interesting 70%	Relevant 63%
Practical 68%	Waste of time 4%	Factual 53%	Upsetting 0%
Reassuring 35%	Enlightening 48%		

4 What effect, if any, has the work had?

Your son or daughter's views about becoming or being a parent

No impact at all	1 18%	2 10%	3 39%	4 25%	5 7%	Very high impact
------------------	----------	----------	----------	----------	---------	------------------

Their relationship with you

No impact at all	1 32%	2 9%	3 16%	4 22%	5 21%	Very high impact
------------------	----------	---------	----------	----------	----------	------------------

Your own views and actions as a parent

No impact at all	1 29%	2 6%	3 16%	4 29%	5 21%	Very high impact
------------------	----------	---------	----------	----------	----------	------------------

- The top 10 topics that parents thought their child had been taught at school were:

Topic	Ranking	%
What parenthood involves	1	61%
The responsibilities of parenting	2	53%
How parenthood changes your life	2	53%
How children respond to different ways that parents treat them	4	51%
Love, commitment and emotional bonds between parents and children	5	48%
Child abuse and children's rights	6	43%
Why people become parents	7	40%
Conception and pregnancy	8	39%
What makes a happy, safe and healthy home for children	9	38%
Financial costs of parenting	10	35%
Everyday skills and qualities for looking after children	11	34%

APPENDIX 6 **PEOPLE WHO PLAYED A PART IN THE PROJECT**

Core teaching group

Cardinal Langley School, Rochdale

Mick Curran

John Durcan

Sheila Sullivan

Falinge Park School, Rochdale

Helen Boulter

Paul Simpson

John Vose

Littlemoss School, Tameside

Gwyn Jones

Gary Robinson

Mossley Hollins School, Tameside

Jean Coulter

Muriel O'Brien

North Chadderton School, Oldham

Chris Curran

Pauline Royle

Management committee

Richard Lane (chair)

Simon Richey, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (UK branch)

Roger Smith, the Children's Society

Philip Hope, Framework

Penny Sharland, Framework

Mick Curran, Cardinal Langley School

John Durcan, headteacher, Cardinal Langley School

John Vose, Falinge Park School

Linda Woolley, headteacher, Falinge Park School

Gwyn Jones, Littlemoss School

Ron Coe, headteacher, Littlemoss School

Jean Coulter, Mossley Hollins School

Martin Bradley, headteacher, Mossley Hollins School

Chris Curran, North Chadderton School

Jenny McClaren, headteacher, North Chadderton School

Sue Hyland, Hilltop Project, the Children's Society

Selwyn Hodge, LEA, Rochdale

Kath Sanderson, LEA, Rochdale

Kay Lord, LEA, Oldham

Jill Saunders, LEA, Tameside

Department for Education and Employment (observers)

Project consultants

Two members of the Framework network of consultants – Philip Hope and Penny Sharland – carried out the planning, research, training, evaluation and writing up of this project.

APPENDIX 7 **CHANGES TO THE EDUCATION FOR PARENTHOOD PACK**

Introduction

The *Education for Parenthood* pack was written by Philip Hope and published by the Children's Society in 1994. Its publication followed extensive consultation with educationalists and testing of the materials with students. The decision to use the pack as the main source of resource materials for this study was based on its suitability and effectiveness as demonstrated thus far. As the pack was likely to come under more extensive scrutiny as a consequence of its use during the project it was decided to evaluate and subsequently revise its content as one of the project's objectives.

The changes suggested by teachers and managers have been minor, and can be incorporated for the most part within the existing structure. A more extensive teachers' guide is being produced, to be included in the second edition of the pack. This brings together the main aspects of learning from the project and includes advice and ideas for teachers who are new to the subject of parenthood. Some updating is taking place including references to the revised National Curriculum, GNVQs and to changing legislation and more recent statistics.

Contents of the pack

BOX 7.1

Comments on the *Education for Parenthood* pack

The form of the pack

'The pack is inviting, professional, good graphics, clear, looks professional and serious, allows you to fold flat for photocopying, separate booklets useful, photocopies well, wallet wipes clean, like the big print and blocks of text.'

The content of the pack

'The pack is clear, easy to read, works well, loads of options for further work, got the thumbs up, at times uses language that wouldn't be understood by some students, very comprehensive, can be used whatever way you want, infinitely variable, material gave room for several viewpoints, clear message of equality, more material directly relevant to Asian culture needed, no shortage of materials.'

The pack consists of five spiral bound books, each covering one of the following areas:

- what it means to be a parent
- what parents need
- parent-child relationships
- rights and responsibilities
- health and development.

Each book details activities relevant to the subject; with a summary of the activity, all resource sheets needed, teachers' notes, learning outcomes, curriculum focus, materials needed, timing and organisation, instructions and additional follow-on suggestions. All the activities are reproduced in such a way that they can be photocopied subject to certain restrictions. In addition there is a teachers' guide. The pack has been very well received by the core group of teachers. Everyone using the pack has found it very useful and relevant. Some of their comments about the pack appear in Box 7.1.

Specific findings

Learning the lessons from the project

The lessons learned about delivering parenthood education need to be passed on from the teachers involved, to those who will not have the benefit of the training offered as part of this project.

Age range

The pack was primarily written for students aged 13 to 17, with the emphasis on 15 and 16 year-olds. The results of this project demonstrate that the materials can be successfully used with students of these ages, with some consideration as to the suitability and appropriateness of activities for younger and older groups.

BOX 7.2

Teachers' comments on the accessibility of the pack

'The pack is very thorough.'

'Leaves room for different cultures, racial groups and genders.'

'It's full of ideas.'

'It doesn't close doors.'

'Teachers have to differentiate some of the material for the group.'

Accessibility

Teachers commented that the materials for teaching parenthood must be accessible to and inclusive of all students. These resources are intended to reflect the different types of families, diverse cultures and approaches to family life which students will already be experiencing, while highlighting some of the key features of good parenting. The pack itself was written to maximise accessibility to students of different family backgrounds, cultures, ages and abilities. Some comments about accessibility appear in Box 7.2.

Before and after assessment

Although the pre-course and post-course questionnaires completed by the students were designed specifically as an evaluation tool for this pilot project, the students also completed a questionnaire already in the pack entitled 'Thinking ahead'.

The students enjoyed completing the original questionnaire but did not enjoy doing both the pack questionnaire and the project questionnaire at the same time – too much overlap and too many questions to answer! However, as indicated, the before-and-after design was useful in collecting information about changes experienced by the students. It is a design that could be incorporated within the pack as a tool for both teachers to assess the impact of the work and for students individually and as a group to assess the changes they have made, if any, in respect of their views.

Recommendations about changes to the pack

- A rewritten and extended teachers' guide should be included in the revised pack. This will draw together all the lessons learned by the participating schools and should cover:
- overview and summary of the project and its findings

- parenthood in the school curriculum
- how to use the *Education for Parenthood* pack
- schemes of work
- practicalities in the classroom
- assessment and evaluation
- getting prepared
- further reading and resources
- The most suitable materials for each age range and some lesson plans devised and tested by teachers should be included in the teachers' guide. All new materials must retain the accessibility achieved throughout the current materials
- a before-and-after questionnaire should be incorporated in the resource materials
- a student logbook and a teacher logbook should be incorporated in the resource materials
- a blank pro-forma should be included in the pack for use as a certificate of achievement
- a model of INSET on parenthood should be included in the re-written teachers' guide that accompanies the resource materials
- stop-gap lessons should be developed for inclusion in the teachers' guide.

Parenthood Education Project

Student evaluation logbook

Name:

Class:

Course:

School:

Using this logbook

You are taking part in a national project to introduce parenthood education into schools. We want to find out what are the best ways of teaching students about what it might mean to become a parent and to bring up children.

To help us judge how it is going we would be grateful if you could tell us what you think about the lessons. Please write your comments on the record sheets in this logbook. We will collect the logbooks from time-to-time and will use your feedback to help us improve the lessons and to write a final report on the activities and the impact of the course.

We hope you find the lessons and activities, and the topic of parenthood relevant, challenging and enjoyable.

Philip Hope and Penny Sharland

Student record sheet**Date:****Lessons/topics:**

1 What did you find most interesting and enjoyable?

2 What did you find least interesting and enjoyable?

3 How much has this session changed your view or opinion about parenthood? Circle the number below:

1
*Not changed
at all*

2

3

4

5
*Changed a
great deal*

4 Why?

Parenthood Education Project

Teacher evaluation logbook

School:

Name:

Course:

Background

Thank you for being one of five secondary schools taking part in a national project to develop parenthood education with 14 to 18 year-old students in schools. Each school is using a variety of approaches to introducing parenthood education activities and materials into the curriculum including personal and social education, English, RE, sixth form leisure, cross-curricula working, school day projects and so on. The back page of this logbook is an outline of the overall scheme of work with which you are involved.

To help evaluate the variety of approaches to parenthood education that are being taken within your school we would be grateful if you could complete a brief record sheet at the end of each lesson you teach. This will give us your feedback on the success of individual activities carried out by the students, and help us to assess the value of different overall approaches to introducing parenthood education into the school curriculum.

The record sheets in this logbook have been designed by some of the teachers involved in the project for everyone to use. A common format of this type will help us to evaluate and develop the project as we go along and to produce a final report. The logbooks will be collected from time to time and returned to you if needed.

Once again, thank you for your involvement and support in the project.

Philip Hope and Penny Sharland

Lesson record sheet**Lesson title:****Date:****Students:****Lesson outline:****Student reactions and learning:****Evaluation/comments:****Overall rating**

What is your overall rating of this lesson? Please circle one score below:

 1 2 3 4 5

Outline scheme of work**School:****Course title:****Staff involved:****Dates:**

Date	Activity	Comments
------	----------	----------

Parenthood Project

Student questionnaire

You are taking part in a national project to introduce parenthood education into schools. To help us judge what impact the work has on you we would like you to complete this questionnaire before the course begins. Your answers will be kept completely confidential. Please give honest answers, not what you think you ought to say! Thank you for taking part.

Section 1 About you

1 **Name**

2 **Male/female** (please circle)

3 **School** (Please tick)

- Falinge Park
- North Chadderton
- Mossley Hollins
- Littlemoss
- Cardinal Langley

4 **Age** (please tick)

- 13
- 14
- 15
- 16
- 17
- 18

5 **Which people live in your home?** (please tick)

- Mother
- Father
- Brother(s)
- Sister(s)
- Grandmother
- Grandfather
- Step-mother
- Step-father
- Guardian
- Other people

(please describe)

6 How would you describe your racial origin? (please tick)

- White
 Black
 Asian
 Other (please state what)
-

7 How prepared do you think you are now to become a parent and be responsible for looking after a child? (circle the number)

Not prepared at all 1 2 3 4 5 *Completely prepared*

8 How interested are you in learning about parenthood? (circle the number)

Not interested at all 1 2 3 4 5 *Very interested indeed*

Section 2 Being a parent

1 What does being a parent mean to you? Circle five of the phrases below that you would most connect with being a parent:

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------------|
| Being grown up | Creating a new life |
| Being in my own home | A major change in my life |
| Loving someone | Continuing the family line |
| Being second | Controlling someone else |
| Having more status | Having less fun |
| Looking after someone | Being restricted |
| Expressing joint love | Having new horizons |
| Having more money | Being right all the time |
| Being part of a family | Having less money |

2 How old do you think you will be when you become a parent for the first time? (please tick)

- under 16
 16 to 18
 19 to 21
 22 to 25
 26 to 30
 over 30

3 How many children would you like to have? (please tick)

- none
 one
 two
 three
 four
 more than four

4 If you had the choice, what would you prefer? (please tick one box)

- Girls only
 Boys only
 A mix of both
 Don't mind

5 Who do you think will make most of the decisions about bringing up your children? (please tick one box)

- You
 Your partner
 You and your partner jointly
 Someone else

6 Who do you think will do most of the practical work in bringing up your children? (please tick one box)

- You
 Your partner
 You and your partner jointly
 Someone else

7 How much impact do you think being a parent will have on you? (circle the number on each issue below):

How you spend your time

No impact at all 1 2 3 4 5 Very high impact

What you spend your money on

No impact at all 1 2 3 4 5 Very high impact

Having a full-time job

No impact at all 1 2 3 4 5 *Very high impact*

Going to college or university

No impact at all 1 2 3 4 5 *Very high impact*

8 Read the list of parenting skills below and choose the six that you believe are the most important. (tick 6 boxes)

<i>Skill</i>	<i>Importance</i>
Coping well with a baby that cries for long periods of time	<input type="checkbox"/>
Choosing baby clothes that are easy to wash	<input type="checkbox"/>
Able to negotiate and resolve conflicts with children	<input type="checkbox"/>
Planning your spending when faced with the extra costs of a baby	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asking people for support when you find it hard to cope	<input type="checkbox"/>
Making sure your child looks smart and attractive	<input type="checkbox"/>
Having respect for yourself and others	<input type="checkbox"/>
Buying the right toys to suit the age of your children	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reading to your children	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teaching your child good manners	<input type="checkbox"/>
Being fair	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stopping your children from hurting themselves badly	<input type="checkbox"/>
Choosing healthy food for your child	<input type="checkbox"/>
Changing a nappy quickly	<input type="checkbox"/>
Playing well with your children	<input type="checkbox"/>
Having the energy to deal with bad behaviour without smacking	<input type="checkbox"/>

Dear Parent,

Parenthood Education Project

Questionnaire

Your daughter or son is taking part in a pilot project to prepare school students for becoming parents. If it is successful we hope it will provide a model for all schools in how to introduce parenthood education in the curriculum. We would encourage you to discuss with your son or daughter the work they have been doing at school about parenting and to let us know what you think. We use the word 'parenting' to include all types of families including young people who are cared for by step-parents, foster parents or other guardians.

Questionnaire

To help us judge the impact of the project upon the students and to get your reactions to the work they are doing it would be very helpful if you could complete and return to the school the questionnaire attached. Your replies will be kept completely confidential. Please put the form in the envelope provided, seal it and give it to your son or daughter to hand in.

Interviews

We would also like to talk to some of the parents of the students involved to discuss in more depth parents' views about teaching parenthood in schools. If you would be prepared to be interviewed on the telephone please indicate this on the form in the space provided.

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete the questionnaire.

Yours sincerely,

Philip Hope Penny Sharland

Parenthood project consultants

Parenthood Project

Parent questionnaire

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. It should take about 15 minutes to do. You may like to complete it on your own, or if appropriate, to complete it jointly with your partner. Read through the form first before filling it in.

After you have completed the questionnaire, do feel free to discuss your replies with your son or daughter if you want to. Please put the finished form in the envelope provided, seal it and ask your son or daughter to return it to their teacher.

Section 1 About you

1 Name

2 Male/female (please circle)

3 School (Please tick)

Falinge Park

North Chadderton

Mossley Hollins

Littlemoss

Cardinal Langley

4 How would you describe your racial origin? (please tick)

White

Black

Asian

Other (please state what)

.....

5 Do you wish you had been taught parenting at school?

Yes

Don't know

No

6 I would/would not* like to be interviewed on the telephone about my views.

* (delete as appropriate)

Section 2 Parenting and school

1 At what age do you think it would be best to introduce parenting at school? (please tick)

13

14

15

16

17

18

2 Which of the topics below do you think students should learn about at school and which do you think your son or daughter has covered this year? (tick the appropriate boxes in each column)

Topic

*Should be
taught at school* *Has been
taught at school*

What it means to be a parent

What parenthood involves

Why people become parents

How parenthood changes your life

How children relate to other relatives and adults

Celebrating the birth of a child in different cultures

Family structures today and in the past

What parents need

Resources needed in the home for babies and children

Financial costs of parenting

Financial support for parents

Where to get advice when you've got a problem

Community facilities and support for parents

Parent-child relationships

Love, commitment and emotional bonds between parents and children

How children respond to different ways that parents treat them

Everyday skills and qualities needed for looking after children

Handling difficult situations with children

Motherhood and fatherhood

Separation between parents and children

Rights and responsibilities

Responsibilities of parenting

Parental consent

Marriage and parenting 'contracts' in different religions

Child abuse and children's rights

Parent action to protect children's welfare

Health and development

Conception and pregnancy

Child development

Play and children's development

Enjoying your children

What makes a happy, safe and healthy home for children

3 Circle 5 words or phrases that reflect your views about the work your son or daughter has done:

Biased	Irrelevant	Pointless	Useful	Challenging
Exciting	Interesting	Relevant	Practical	Waste of
time	Factual	Upsetting	Reassuring	Enlightening

4 What effect, if any, has the work had? (circle the number for each issue)

Your son or daughter's views about becoming or being a parent

No impact at all 1 2 3 4 5 Very high impact

Their relationship with you

No impact at all 1 2 3 4 5 Very high impact

Your own views and actions as a parent

No impact at all 1 2 3 4 5 Very high impact

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. Do feel free to discuss your replies with your son or daughter if you want to. Please put the finished form in the envelope provided, seal it and ask your son or daughter to return it to their teacher.

TOMORROW'S PARENTS

DEVELOPING PARENTHOOD EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS

PHILIP HOPE & PENNY SHARLAND

This report is the result of an innovative project designed to implement parenthood education in secondary schools. It describes how a range of students in five secondary schools in Greater Manchester were taught about parenthood and what impact this had on the students, the teachers, the schools in general and the students' parents.

When parenthood education is delivered well in schools there is a measurable, positive impact on students' knowledge, skills and understanding.

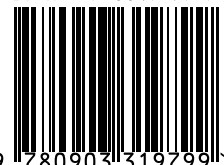
By developing young people's understanding of what parenthood means today we are helping to create responsible and successful parents for tomorrow.

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