Maintaining play based pedagogy using The Australian Curriculum (C2C)

Presented by Anne Pearson
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The Facts-setting the context for our discussion

* **Australian Curriculum-**
  
  What is the Australian Curriculum?

  * The Australian Curriculum sets out what all young Australians are to be taught, and the expected quality of that learning as they progress through schooling. **At the same time, it provides flexibility for teachers and schools to build on student learning and interest.**

  * It is intended that jurisdictions, systems and schools will be able to implement the Australian Curriculum in ways that value teachers’ professional knowledge, reflect the local contexts and take into account the individual’s family, culture and community background.

  * Reference:-
    [www.australiancurriculum.edu.au](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au)

* Developing an Australian Curriculum means that:

  * 1. School and curriculum authorities can collaborate to ensure high quality teaching and learning materials are available for all schools.

  * 2. Greater attention can be devoted to equipping young Australians with those skills, knowledge and capabilities necessary to enable them to effectively engage with and prosper in society, compete in a globalised world and thrive in the information-rich workplaces of the future.

  * 3. There will be greater consistency for the country’s increasingly mobile student and teacher population.
EQ have provided guidelines for their staff in the form of C2C documents.

C2C—the Curriculum into the classroom (C2C) materials have been created to reduce workload and duplication in schools as they develop their curriculum plans for the Australian Curriculum.

The intent of C2C is to provide schools and teachers with plans that they can use as they are or change to suit the needs of their students. There is no requirement for teachers to use every aspect of a sample lesson or every resource. Don’t be afraid to use the parts that work for you and your students and reject those that don’t. Reference- Julie Grantham  Director-General 16.2.12

Union- C2C – your professional choice

The QTU has received significant feedback regarding the implementation of the Australian Curriculum using the C2C resources. While in some schools the use of C2C has not been a cause of concern, many members are reporting that they are feeling overwhelmed by C2C resulting in high levels of stress and frustration.

Important facts about the use of C2C

1. C2C is not the Australian Curriculum – it is a set of resources to assist schools to commence implementation of the Australian Curriculum.
**C2C union facts**

2. C2C is not mandatory – in her message on 16 February 2012, the Director-General states: “There is no requirement for teachers to use every aspect of a sample lesson or every resource.”
   (www.qtu.asn.au/DG_16feb12)

3. The intent of C2C is to support, not prescribe classroom practice – “Curriculum into the classroom (C2C) materials have been created to reduce workload and duplication in schools as they develop their curriculum plans for the Australian Curriculum” (Director-General of Education 16 February 2012).

4. This year is a transition year as schools begin implementing the Australian Curriculum – this does not mean that the Australian Curriculum needs to be implemented in its entirety.

**Early Childhood Pedagogy**

- The Early Years’ Curriculum Guidelines provides teachers in Queensland with a framework (or pedagogy) which still guides our teaching.

- **5 Early Learning Areas** - Social & Personal Learning; Health & Physical learning; Language learning & communication (Australian Curriculum leading content NOT pedagogy); Early Mathematical understandings (Australian Curriculum leading content NOT pedagogy); Active Learning processes(Australian Curriculum leading Science content NOT pedagogy)

- **5 Contexts for learning** - Play; Real – life situations; Investigations; Routines & transitions; Focused Learning & Teaching.

- **5 Key components** - Understanding children; Building partnerships; Flexible Learning Environments; Contexts for Learning; What children learning

- **4 Interactive processes for curriculum decision making** - planning; interacting; Monitoring & assessing; Reflecting
Term 1

Get to know my students

- During the week before Pupil Frees we sent the children a letter welcoming them to the school and inviting them to the Open Day.
- This year we met our classes at the open day on the Thursday Pupil free. Mango Hill SS is a brand new school, and we had an open day so children and parents were able to see the new classrooms, and meet the teachers & students.
- We also presented the parent with a First day bag, a warm fuzzy gift to welcome them, and that had sunflower seeds in it, that then were used as part of Science.
- We started with an “All about me” survey, and used that as a conversation starter.
- Daily routines were established from day one to provide opportunities for security and connections to be made.

Interview-Prior to the opening day all children and families were interviewed by our Principal. She made fabulous notes that she shared with us to help with initial planning.
Pre-tests- from day 1 I had planned a series of pre-tests to give me an indication of where to start the children’s new learning from. Some of these I did 1 on 1, to give me a chance to chat and get to know the children and some were completed during group times by an aide.

Pre-tests included -
1. Cutting
2. Drawing – pencil grip, control, stage of drawing development
3. Alphabet knowledge
4. Counting/ colours/shapes/subitizing

All about me page- The children completed an A3 page called “All about me” which we then made into a class book the children and families can share. As well as being the first oral presentation for the year.
Getting to know the Australian Curriculum - as I had been involved in an early implementation of Australian Curriculum during 2011, the content of the Australian Curriculum was a little more familiar to me, but I have still needed time to get to know my children and the Australian Curriculum / C2C. I have taken my time and have tried to link closely to the knowledge I had of my class from the Pre-testing and surveys I completed in the first couple of weeks. The content (the what to teach) is different to what we’ve covered in the past, but using professional judgements I have been able to differentiate and scaffold my groups and questions to meet the needs of my class.
Beginning of year activities

- I planned to start my year in a very similar manner to that I have in the past. The first week we negotiated the way in which we would use the different areas of the class room, and developed our own rules for those areas as we introduced them. I start with a basic environment (home corner, block area, puzzles/games and drawing) and as I see the children gaining control and appropriate use of the area I then add a new area or item.

- Setting the boundaries and rules slowly and with the children gave us all ownership of the class room. This also introduced our negotiation and shared planning of the inside play time “Plan & Play”
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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:40 – 9:00</td>
<td>Welcome song &amp; Circle time.</td>
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<td>9am Welcome song &amp; Circle time.</td>
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<td>9:00-9:45</td>
<td>Literacy groups (Group rotations)</td>
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<td>9:45-10am</td>
<td>Brain food break</td>
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<td>10:10 – 10:40</td>
<td>Maths</td>
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<td>10:40 – 11:00</td>
<td>Outside play</td>
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<td>11:00 – 11:20</td>
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<td>11:20 – 11:30</td>
<td>Lunch in room</td>
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<td>11:30 – 12:10</td>
<td>Planning time Plan &amp; play</td>
<td>Visual Diary</td>
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<td>Care Group</td>
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<td>12:30 pack up</td>
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<td>1:00 – 1:10</td>
<td>12:40-1:10</td>
<td>Music/Dance</td>
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<td>Transition to lunch SUZETTE</td>
<td>Music/Dance</td>
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<td>1:10 – 1:35</td>
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<td>1:45 – 2:30</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Outdoor Program (All Classes Rotation) O/C, Perceptual motor</td>
<td>Outdoor Program (All Classes Rotation) Sandpit playground</td>
<td>Outdoor Program (All Classes Rotation) Games</td>
<td>Literacy time</td>
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<td>2:30 – 2:45</td>
<td>Transition to home</td>
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Aide time

The prep team were asked to organise their own aide time table, sharing 2 aides between three classes. We have the recommended allocation for a Prep class. We came up with a plan that supported each others teaching style and preferred timetable.

Along with parent helpers, my timetable has worked well, and I have an aide for the times I need.

I also have trainee aides and special needs aides to support special needs children in my group.

My timetable is very specific so that the time is used effectively and is very accountable for IEPs and support.
Project 1- All about me!

Purpose of unit - We decided to have a normal Prep beginning of the year unit so that we could get to know the children and establish the routines and boundaries that are so important in Prep. We focused on establishing rules, developing friendships, developing understandings of each others families and cultures. A heavy literature focus was used as a vehicle to share ideas and begin discussions.

Links to C2C - when planning the unit, we looked at the key focuses for C2C, and then discussed ways to incorporate this into our unit.

For example in English:-
A suggested teaching and learning sequence is outlined below.

Getting started
- Modelled reading of a literary text
- Modelled reading of a non-literary text
- Modelled writing
- Innovate on a text
- Explore different languages Home languages
- Retelling of a simple, short animation
- Developing some metalinguistic concepts

Imagine
- Modelled reading — Imagine
- Shared reading — Imagine
- Using illustrations and words to actively learn
- Using lists to help plan ideas
- Imagining with boxes Pets planning.
- Clancy and Millie— create a planning list
- Imagining with dress-ups
* **Signs and labels**
  - Introduce the need for signs and labels
  - Signs and labels in a story - Pet shop
  - Signs and labels in the classroom - also visual timetable
  - Labelling items in a location
  - Signs in the environment
  - Using signs to follow instructions
  - Reading predictable text
* **Communicating with letters and messages**
  - Sharing postcards from Chester travel buddy.
* Letter to AVA pet volunteers to say Thanks.

Ref - Curriculum Unit Plan Details-
The Terms work

Decisions about planning

• Children’s development - through the initial observations and assessment of the children I was able to make valid judgements based on fact and modify (differentiate) the content (C2C/A.C) to suit the children. Having thoroughly engaged in the new content I was able to make decisions on books/activities that suited mine and the children’s interests and complimented the content.

• Curriculum – the content of the Maths, and English was directly linked to the children’s groups. Some groups were keeping up with the C2C expectations others needed more time to develop those foundations.

Maths - Lots of practice time was provided for the children to engage and rehearse and practice the foundational skills needed before they move on to the next stage. Basing our judgements on First Steps and knowledge of maths teaching ensured we didn’t rush the children through this stage.
English - Time for consolidation was also used to develop skills in English. Some of the C2C lesson ideas were used, but repeated over days and weeks to develop firm foundational understandings.

Example - every morning the children place our name cards on the mat to give everyone a place to sit. We then use the name cards to count how many children are present on the day; and then explore concepts about letters, letter relationships and understandings of how words are formed – (how many letters in each others name; how many vowels in our names; whose name starts with “A” etc. )

Shared reading - is a daily activity with a focus on concepts of print; story content, word and letter knowledge.

Time must be provided for children to build gradually on the content as well as social skills and routines.
C2C activities used

- The resources put together for the C2C need to be examined to decide on their appropriateness for your class and your groups within your class.
- I have found that if I look at the c2C’s as a resource book, similar to the old Source Books, then they become more user friendly, and relevant.
- Having confidence in your self to make educated judgements, you can logically select the best and most useful.
- Some are excellent as transitions and for use while our children eat their lunch in the class room.

Hyper-links to C2C activities:
- https://learningplace.eq.edu.au/cx/resources/items/cf5852fd-88e4-0eb4-6bf9-267658198eb5/1/viewIMS.jsp
Using the sequence of the C2C activities helped ensure we weren’t missing any thing. It also gave ideas for alternative activities for differentiation.

Ensuring one of the aims of the Australian curriculum to maintain continuity across the Country, means that we do need to cover the main areas of the content of the C2C, eg- letters; postcards; genres etc.

**Science**- the science units have given better sequence to teaching science than we have had before, but again we linked it to our school/ class and area. From the beginning we chose to have class pets, and grow plants that the children had a connection to.

We followed the Teaching Sequence Summary:-
- The living world
- The needs of living things
- Meeting needs in different environments
- The impact of human actions

Then modified the lessons to suit our group. Biological sciences are easier to cover as the children’s interests and our knowledge is high, but next Term will be a little different as I expand my knowledge too!
Differentiation

* I have found reminding myself that the C2C activities are aimed at an average hypothetical class keeps me focused on the reality of what is achievable.

* Modifying activities to be harder or easier from this point has been possible knowing where the children started and where we can realistically move them along the learning continuum to.

* Professional judgements are the key.

* I am running 5 groups in English and 5 groups in Maths. The children work at above or below expectations, with appropriate scaffolding to extend them as individuals and groups.

* I work with two main groups a day, so that by the end of the week I have worked with each
The second project was the next stage of the negotiation process. We began with a discussion about what we already know about pets.

- I lead them to the topic of pets, through explaining about our Science next stage, and through introducing the AVApets visit.

- Then we discussed how we could use the areas of the class to help us with our learning. This gave us a chance to explore the children’s understandings of the flexible learning space and for me to add to their ideas.

- We began to make plans for creating our inside play, and what we needed to find more information about.

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What do pets need?

- Grace: dogs live outside
- Nates: food
- Sarah: feed them
- Ebony: need a drink - water
- Grant: dogs need dog food.
- Luke: other species need other species to play
- Martin: need a collar - dog/cats
- Chloe: lead
- Fish: fish tank

How can we learn about pets in plan and play?

- Farm: house, barn, animals, cows, farmer, sheep, hay, fences
- Pet shop: people need to buy them - pet food, dogs, cats, rabbit, make cages, fish, tanks, guinea pigs, mouse, cage, parrot, budgie, cage.
Each day we spent time talking about the books we read about pets, the pets we had at home, and how we could add to our learning during plan and play.

The children made lists with me each day and we worked our way through the items we needed for the shop, and a farm (extension idea from children), as well as extended on the basic environment.

Every Friday we spent time reviewing what we had covered in the week and made plans for the following week, giving myself and the children time to find the resources & props we needed.

We put the props aside (to give me time to work on concept of shop & role-play), and kept creating until this week we are ready to set up the shop area.
So Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday of this week have been setting up the Pet Shop, and finalising our plans for the farm area.

The shop beginnings!

Farm
Looking ahead!

* Term 2 C2c or not to C2C!
* Today the Prep team met (release day) to complete our overview for the next Term, based on our assessment and observations for each individual class. We will be working on the content prescribed by the Australian Curriculum and the outline in the C2C resource, but modifying it to suit our class needs, and interests.

* How this looks in my room will be developed over the next couple of weeks, but I am free to use my professional judgement to ensure continuity & consolidation of the content expected in the Australian Curriculum.
* There will be play, and there will be direct focused teaching, but it will be balanced and age appropriate.
* My teaching has changed since the introduction of Prep, but I am still being true to myself, my philosophy and the best interests of my class.
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* ECTA Conference – June 23rd Sheldon College

* www.ecta.org.au

* QAMT early years conference- The conference is being conducted on Saturday 19th May at Jindalee State School from 9:00 am – 3:00pm.

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