

Introduction

'Living. Learning. Together.' A practical resource to support the new Area of Learning: Personal Development and Mutual Understanding in the Northern Ireland Primary curriculum

Foundation Stage
year 2

**living
learning
together**



What is 'Living. Learning. Together.'?

Living. Learning. Together is a planned and progressive Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU) programme for 5-11 year olds. It will assist schools in developing children's personal, emotional, social and health needs and in preparing them to contribute to their communities in ways that make a positive and lasting impact.

'Living. Learning. Together.' will make a significant contribution to the whole school provision for PDMU. However, it is not intended to be a definitive resource; schools are encouraged to supplement this resource as best suits the needs and interests of their own children, for example, with relevant resources from external agencies, current issues from the media and their existing planning.



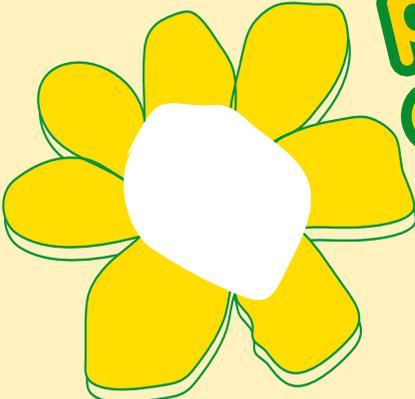
Who is it For?

This resource is intended for the whole school community. It is likely to be co-planned by the Head Teacher or Senior Manager together with the PDMU co-ordinator and developed mainly by the teacher in the classroom. Elements of this resource will also be useful to other adults who have contact with the children. Teaching assistants, lunchtime staff and other support staff may need to be made aware of the core concepts and vocabulary that are introduced and developed with the children.

Introduction

Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU) focuses on encouraging each child to become personally, emotionally, socially and physically effective; to lead healthy, safe and fulfilled lives and to become confident, independent and responsible citizens, making informed and responsible choices and decisions throughout their lives.

The purpose of PDMU as a separate Area of Learning within the primary curriculum is to provide the opportunity for specific attention to be given to emotional development; health and safety; relationships with others; and the development of a greater understanding of their place in the community and of its interdependent nature.



personal
emotional
health
relationship
responsibility
diversity
community

awareness

The Programme

The majority of the materials originate from the Walk Tall Programme produced by the Department of Education and Science in the Republic of Ireland. This programme was extensively trialled and piloted in a large number of schools over a number of years.

At the outset of the curriculum review, a PDMU pilot was conducted in a number of schools across Northern Ireland. The evaluation of this pilot stressed the need for a comprehensive, progressive programme in PDMU. A subsequent larger pilot involved schools trialling the 'Walk Tall Together' programme. The large scale evaluation from this pilot established a need for the materials to be contextualised in order to meet the requirements of teachers and children in Northern Ireland. This evaluation report and an executive summary may be accessed at www.nicurriculum.org.uk within the PDMU section.

The Process

'Living. Learning. Together.' has been designed to support the implementation process of the revised Northern Ireland Primary Curriculum. Continuing professional development materials have been produced to support a school's readiness for Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU). These CPD materials include:

- School Ethos; of how their school ethos supports PDMU;
- Detail of the Area of Learning; their understanding of what PDMU entails;
- Whole school approaches to PDMU; what it means to the school community; and it
- Developing a supportive learning environment. will highlight the strengths and areas for PDMU development within the school.

It is advised that schools begin initially with the guidance and INSET materials and engage in the self evaluation process. Outcomes of this process will identify where the school is in terms

of how their school ethos supports PDMU; their understanding of what PDMU entails; what it means to the school community; and it will highlight the strengths and areas for PDMU development within the school.

It is through this process that schools will be in a clearer position to integrate aspects or all of this resource and, in turn, be able to monitor and evaluate its progress.

Contexts for Learning

Personal Development and Mutual Understanding provides important and relevant contexts for the development of the Northern Ireland Curriculum skills and capabilities, for example,

Cross Curricular Skills

- **Communication:** express themselves socially and emotionally to develop as individuals, engage with others and contribute as members of society;
- **Using Mathematics:** use mathematical understanding and language to ask and answer questions, to talk about and discuss ideas. Read, organise, present and interpret information.
- **Using Information and Communication Technology:** access and manage data using a range of electronic sources. Research, select and use information to support PDMU. Present and communicate their learning in a way that is meaningful to others.

Personal Capabilities:

- **Self Management:** being able to manage emotions, time and learning. To develop confidence in their ability to work independently and with a group; and
- **Working with Others** to develop the social and interpersonal skills necessary to enable effective team-work.

Thinking Skills:

- **Creativity:** being open and willing to experiment with their own and others' ideas;
- **Managing Information:** critically comparing and evaluating information to enable deeper and wider thinking concerning their values and attitudes; and
- **Thinking, Problem Solving and Decision Making:** developing strategies to make responsible decisions and choices.

This resource recognises that children learn about PDMU throughout the school day and that the school and classroom climate and environment are crucial to effective learning. At the same time it is also important to set aside a discrete time in which there is a specific focus on PDMU learning activities.

How the Resource is Organised

This resource is structured in seven different coloured units - Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue, Indigo and Violet. Each unit identifies the minimum content set out in bold along with the non-statutory guidance. The minimum content is further developed through suggested learning activities. The materials provided are not prescriptive but provide a menu of suggested learning activities and methodologies that may be useful when developing the minimum content.

Teachers should familiarise themselves with the suggested learning activities, adapt them to suit their own planning and integrate them into their themes to suit the particular needs of their classroom and situation. The learning activities are flexible and related and so allow for a variety of learning and teaching styles.

Each unit has an overall learning intention that teachers may integrate as part of their planning. This will inform the development of the learning activities and help teachers make judgements when assessing. The learning activities have 'suggested success criteria' which teachers could use as a springboard for devising and sharing their own success criteria with the children.

Strand 1: Personal Understanding And Health

Themselves and Their Personal Attributes

Learning Intention: Recognise uniqueness and value personal qualities and abilities.

Managing their Feelings and Emotions

Learning Intention: Recognise and manage a variety of feelings.

Keeping Healthy and Safe

Learning Intention: Recognise what constitutes a healthy lifestyle.

Strand 2: Mutual Understanding in The Local And Wider Community

Relationships with Family and Friends

Learning Intention: Understand the importance of positive relationships with family and friends

Responsibilities and Conflict Situations

Learning Intention: Understand the necessity for classroom rules and positive management of conflict

Similarities and Differences Between Groups of People

Learning Intention: Recognise and value diversity

Learning to Live as a Member of a Community

Learning Intention: Understand their role in the school community



Assessment

‘The learning situation is awash with process - the ongoing reality of students interacting with ideas, with one another, with the teacher and with the physical environment, displaying as they do the workings of their minds and spirits in how they define and respond to the situation they are living through. Some of this may be faintly echoed in whatever products they emerge with. But we can learn much more about students if we observe how they learn and produce.’ Derek Rowntree

Observation of Personal Development and Mutual Understanding

The learning experiences and activities provided in ‘Living. Learning. Together.’ are first hand practical experiences that reflect the ethos of teaching and learning in the N.I. Primary Curriculum. It follows that the methodology advocated to assess PDMU

would likewise be based on first hand practical experience.

Teachers spontaneously observe and make informal judgements on their children every day. However, well-planned, regular and systematic observation in PDMU will help teachers gain a more accurate picture and thus make informed judgements about the progress each child is making. The information obtained from observation can inform the next steps in learning and teaching.

Planning for observation

It is essential in a busy classroom to plan who or what you intend to observe at any time. It is also crucial to have an agreed system in place otherwise the endless possibilities and opportunities can appear overwhelming. On the other hand, there should also be the opportunity to record the spontaneous responses of pupils if these are significant. Therefore most effective

methods of observation provide opportunities for the teacher to record both planned and spontaneous observations.

This climate of positive recognition and the importance of observation is reflected in the resource. Each unit is supported by ‘Progress in Learning’ indicators which will support the adult’s observations of children and signal to them whether a child is showing signs of progressing. The ‘Progress in Learning’ indicators provide a mixture of knowledge, skills and capabilities that can be noted to support observations. In all, teachers will be looking for a range of behaviours and not just a systematic ‘tick list’.

It is suggested that there should be a combination of planned and spontaneous, formal and informal observations that take place over a wide range of contexts, in both group and individual learning activities at varying times of the day and school year.

Acknowledgements

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Pilot Schools

Ballyhackett Primary School, Castlerock
Cedar Integrated Primary School, Crossgar
D.H.Christie Memorial Primary School, Coleraine
Derrylatinee Primary School, Dungannon
Euston Street Primary School, Belfast
Harmony Hill Primary School, Lisburn
Killinchy Primary School
Lurgan Model Primary School
Millburn Primary School, Coleraine
Oakgrove Integrated Primary School, Londonderry
Portrush Primary School
Seagoe Primary School, Portadown
Seaview Primary School, Belfast
St Anne's Primary School, Donaghadee
St Bride's Primary School, Belfast
St Brigid's Primary School, Cloughmills
St Clare's Convent Primary School, Newry
St John the Baptist Primary School, Portadown
St John Bosco Primary School, Portglenone
St Joseph's Primary School, Killough
St Luke's Primary School, Dunmurry
St Malachy's Primary School, Coleraine
St Mary's Primary School, Maghera
St Mary's Primary School, Saintfield
St Patrick's Primary School, Maghera
St Peter and St Paul Primary School, Dungiven
St Theresa's Primary School, Belfast
Tonagh Primary School, Lisburn
Victoria Preparatory School, Belfast

thank you



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