

Realities of Homelessness

Introduction

This lesson aims to stimulate pupil thinking, discussion and reflection on the negative labels, stereotypes and misconceptions commonly associated with homelessness.

Pupils have opportunities to identify and consider the difficulties those experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness and their families may experience.

The activities in this lesson enable pupils to:

- become more compassionate, caring and empathetic towards others;
- reduce stereotypical thinking and judgemental attitudes; and
- recognise the need for support and initiatives that community organisations and charities provide to help those in need.

Main Areas of Curricular Focus

- The World Around Us
- Personal Development and Mutual Understanding
- Language and Literacy
- The Arts

Suggested Learning Intentions

Pupils will:

- be aware of homelessness as a societal issue;
- begin to develop empathy for people experiencing homelessness;
- realise the importance of shelter as a basic need;
- appreciate that a home is more than just a building;
- begin to recognise how families and homes can differ;
- begin to appreciate the difference between needs and wants;
- begin to link cause and effect; and
- recognise their own and others' feelings and emotions.

Realities of Homelessness

Issues to consider

It is important to be aware that lessons on home, families and homelessness can include sensitive and controversial issues. Certain content covered within this resource may affect some of your pupils. It is therefore essential to be well prepared and have established a working relationship with your pupils. Schools have policies, such as child protection and pastoral policies, for dealing with controversial issues. You can use these and work with your school's Education Welfare Officers and Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators to ensure that you teach this topic sensitively.

You can also find advice on how to approach teaching controversial issues in a safeguarded environment in the classroom and at a whole-school level in these guidance documents:

[Personal Development and Mutual Understanding for Key Stages 1 & 2](#) CCEA (2007)

[Teaching Controversial Issues at Key Stage 3](#) CCEA (2015)

Guidance on Supporting Learning with Severe Learning Difficulties at Risk of Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties CCEA (2018)