



Dingwall Academy, Highland.

Quality Indicators Demonstrated

1.1

Curriculum

1.2

- Structure of Curriculum
- Courses and Programmes

3.1

Learning and Teaching

3.2

- Teacher's planning
- The teaching process
- Pupils' learning experiences

3.3

4.2

Support for Pupils

- Personal & Social Development

5.4

Ethos

- Partnership with parents

7.4

Management, Leadership and Quality Assurance

- Leadership

Dingwall Academy, Highland

Dingwall Academy is a 6 year comprehensive, non-denominational, co-educational school with a roll of 1030 pupils mostly from rural communities. There are few pupils from minority ethnic groups, but this might increase with the arrival of families from countries recently admitted to the European Union. Since there is no denominational school in the area, pupils from all faiths and none attend the school. Some pupils' football allegiances include, after their local team, Celtic and Rangers, and those who travel to football matches to support their local team are aware of sectarianism within their ranks and those of other team supporters. In the Dingwall area there are various religious sects of Christianity, but there is no perceived 'sectarianism' in the school community, although a number of parents exercise their right to withdraw their young people from Religious and Moral Education lessons which do not adhere to their own faith beliefs.

Quality Indicators 1.1 1.2 3.1 3.2 3.3 4.2 5.4 7.4

1.1 Structure of the Curriculum

Dingwall Academy staff members see possibilities for cross-curriculum learning and teaching using Drama, Personal, Social and Health Education, Religious and Moral Education, History, Geography and English Language. They would like to develop lessons in and around these subject areas.

Equally, there is a suggestion that a rolling programme should be devised to allow anti-sectarianism education to be re-visited through different subject areas and across year groups from Secondary 2 to Secondary 5. For example, the Secondary 3 History curriculum could include a study of the Irish potato famine; Secondary 2 English literature could incorporate a novel related to sectarianism in the literacy curriculum.

1.2 Courses and Programmes

See also 1.1

Stated Objectives were:

- To encourage in pupils the development of life skills
- To look at and focus on the aspects which apply to the 'Highland' context
- To address the local context before considering the wider context
- To encourage pupils to *think* before expressing their views
- To raise the profile of acceptance/tolerance in a town whose population has a number of minority ethnic people and refugees

3.1 Teacher's planning

One member of staff researched the anti-sectarianism resource and found a selection of games and activities to use with pupils. It was planned to incorporate the learning activities into the Religious and Moral Education topic "*Issues of Belief*" with Secondary 2 classes. Furthermore, Secondary 2 pupils were about to undertake a research topic and it was believed that this would make an appropriate focus; in particular the football agenda was seen as likely to appeal to pupils, some of whom have strong football allegiances and exhibited challenging behaviour. With its mixed ability classes, Secondary 2 was also seen as the ideal stage for this cross-curricular topic.

3.2 The teaching process

See also 3.1. The following scenarios from the anti-sectarianism resource were chosen as a focus for discussions:

- The 60 minute Sectarian
- I Want to be a Frog (link with Other World Religions-Buddhism)
- Bus Stop

A total of 6 lesson periods were devoted to the work, which was mainly discussion-based, but included Drama and role play.

A selection of games from the resource was used successfully as a context for building trust among the pupils from 2 discrete classes before embarking on the deeper issues. Work on the activities was undertaken over the period October to December.

3.3 Pupils' learning experiences

Pupils became very engaged in the discussion activities and gave positive feedback when asked to evaluate their learning experiences and outcomes.

The games were played with enthusiasm and were effective in enabling pupils from different friendship groups to interact as they had not done in the past.

4.2 Personal & Social Development

Time was given to discussion about attitudes towards prejudice and discrimination, including sectarianism, where all pupils were able to offer their opinions openly in a safe environment whilst ensuring that discriminatory attitudes and negative views and stereotypes were constructively addressed.

5.4 Partnership with parents

Letters were sent to parents of Secondary 2 pupils to inform them of the plans to deliver this topic. Some slight concerns were expressed by parents about introducing a “new issue”. These were dealt with and allayed by the Senior Management Team whose response outlined the aims and objectives of the work, and emphasised the proposed “Highland perspective” on the issues.

7.4 Leadership

The Senior Management Team has adopted a leadership role in the rolling out of the topic, and has plans to introduce anti-sectarian education across the school.

There is also a plan to nominate a school coordinator for the project, to have an overview of what various subject specialisms can do to undertake development work for future use. The Senior Management Team also plans to introduce the topic to Primary 7 pupils and use it as a context for their 3 day Primary-Secondary transition pupil induction programme.

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