

Pupil participation and appreciation of diversity

School/centre: Glaitness Primary School, Orkney

Age range: P3

Education for Citizenship contexts: community links, curricular areas

Glaitness citizenship programme

Glaitness Primary School in Kirkwall is a school with established forms of pupil participation through an active pupil committee, which in the past has been heavily involved in design of play areas. It also has some interesting curricular approaches to education for citizenship. Amongst these is 'From Orkney to Norway', a programme of work for 7-8 year-olds developed by Primary 3 teacher, Lesley Mackay. The programme aims to develop in the children an awareness of their identity as individuals and as members of a class, school and cultural community, respect for cultural diversity, and familiarity with the shared rights of children globally. It builds on a successful link with a school in Norway. The internet is used as a means of communicating with the Norwegian school and sharing aspects of cultural identity via the school website. Digital video is used as a means of recording expressive arts work for formative assessment purposes and to share with other audiences. Visual arts and drama, dance and music have an important role in the course as a means through which children can express aspects of their own identity and those which are shared with the children in Norway.

The programme is structured around three units.

1. **Who are we?** - This provides opportunities for children to explore aspects of identity and develop their own identity as a member of a class community. This collective identity is expressed through the making of a giant class puppet and a video, "This is our school", both of which are sent to Norway.
2. **These are our Rights** - helps children to develop awareness of what rights are and how these rights are part of their everyday lives. Children become familiar with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and to consider not only their own rights but also those of all people in the school, including other children and teachers. The idea that children in all cultures share rights helps to link the everyday experiences in our lives with the sometimes very different lives of children globally. The children's work on rights is displayed prominently in school for several weeks. Activities from **Partners in Rights** (Save the Children, 2000) are used to develop activities for units 1 and 2. This work is also timed to tie in with One World Week. Class 3 will produce an Assembly based on a theme from One World Week resources and in Norway the children participate in a whole school and community day of activities.
3. **Our Stories** - helps children develop a sense of belonging to a wider cultural community, shaped by language arts, music and the environment. The children are encouraged to link their own cultural identity with those of children in Norway to give them a sense of belonging to a wider community. The strong link between Orkney and Hordaland is used extensively to support this work as Christmas approaches. Norwegian musicians and dancers and Orkney storytellers visit the class. Norwegian exchange students are invited in to describe and recreate Christmas preparations which derive from Norway. Aspects of culture which are common to both communities are recorded and shared. These include the children participating in the Santa Lucia procession in school and at the St Magnus cathedral tree lighting ceremony, and comparing traditions of fiddle music and of folktales

Education for Citizenship in Scotland case study

about “trows” and trolls. A local custom, the Kirkwall Ba’, is studied, enacted and represented.

These are excellent resources and stimulating approaches to learning and teaching, both structured and targeted to sensitise children to important issues relevant to their future lives.

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