



The Hull Schools Linking Project 2008-9

The Schools Linking Project was established by the Schools Linking Network (SLN) in Bradford in 2001 after the disturbances in Bradford during the previous summer and the events of 9/11. It began with a meeting between the Year 6 classes from two primary schools; schools that had populations with different ethnic backgrounds, one Pakistani Muslim and the other mainly white British. Both of these schools were doing excellent work in different ways and one of the aims of the meeting was to bring the good work from both schools together. They quickly discovered that teachers combining their different skills and perspectives could be a powerful catalyst for new learning and raising achievement. The children quickly discovered that they could make friends with children with whom they would never normally have contact. The SLN soon realised that linking schools could have a powerful impact on young people in Bradford. As one boy said; "If all schools in Bradford did this we wouldn't have riots"

The aims and objectives of the project are as follows:

Aims

- To provide opportunities for children, their families and carers, from different ethnic, cultural, social and religious backgrounds, (who might not normally meet, because they live and attend schools in different areas of the district) to work and play together.
- For adults who work with the children, to meet to share ideas and broaden perspectives. To increase the children's knowledge and understanding about the diverse nature of local communities.
- For children to develop good relationships and respect the differences between people.
- To provide shared learning experiences which celebrate diversity, dispel stereotypes and remove barriers which cause racism, and which promote a cohesive community.
- To develop the children's skills of enquiry, communication and participation. For children and adults to work with creative partners and to work in the district's cultural venues, to enhance the curriculum through creativity.

Objectives

Children should be taught:

To recognise their worth as individuals by identifying positive things about themselves and their achievements.

To identify national, regional, cultural, religious and ethnic identities and to think about and value the lives of people living in different places, times and ways.

To talk, write and express (through a range of creative media) their ideas, their opinions and explain their views, on issues that affect themselves and society.

To research, discuss and debate issues of diversity and cohesion, problems and events and explore how the media present information.

To explore how to face new challenges positively.

To develop the skills to form effective positive relationships with their peers through work and play.

To resolve differences by looking at alternatives, making decisions and explaining choices.

To recognise and learn to challenge stereotypes, anti-social, or racist behaviours.

To reflect on spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues, using imagination and empathy to understand other people's experiences.

Government Guidance

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 inserted a new section 21(5) to the Education Act 2002 introducing a duty on the governing bodies of maintained schools to promote community cohesion. This builds on the RRAA, which supports equality for all pupils and positive race relations. Ofsted started to inspect this from September 2008.

The following document provides guidance to support schools in promoting community cohesion.

Guidance on the duty to promote community cohesion

1. Introduction

The curriculum for all maintained schools should promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, and prepare pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life[1].

Schools have a duty to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between people of different groups[2].

All schools will recognise these two important statements which are part of existing law. From September 2007 schools will also be under a new duty to promote community cohesion[3]. Most schools already consider this as a fundamental part of their role and already work in ways which promote community cohesion. Similarly, many local authorities are working to promote community cohesion and should also regard this as an area to support schools. This document looks at ways in which schools can build on what is happening already in light of the new duty.

Every school - whatever its intake and wherever it is located - is responsible for educating children and young people who will live and work in a country which is diverse in terms of cultures, religions or beliefs, ethnicities and social backgrounds. Different types of schools in different communities will clearly face different challenges and globalisation means both that the populations of schools are often more diverse, and that they might also change at fairly short notice. The staff and pupil populations of some schools reflect this diversity, allowing their pupils to mix with those from different backgrounds. Other schools, often by nature of their location, serve a predominantly mono-cultural population.

As all children and young people can benefit from meaningful interaction, schools will need to consider how to give their pupils the opportunity to mix with and learn with, from and about those from different backgrounds, for example through links with other schools and community organisations. Through their ethos and curriculum; schools can promote discussion of a common sense of identity and support diversity, showing pupils how different communities can be united by shared values and common experiences. One of the aims of the new secondary curriculum is for all young people to become responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to society and citizenship education offers opportunities for schools to promote community cohesion. The *Diversity and Citizenship Curriculum Review* published in February 2007 states that:

...we passionately believe that it is the duty of all schools to address issues of 'how we live together' and 'dealing with difference' however controversial and difficult they might sometimes seem.

This guidance is non-statutory and is offered as formative guidance to support all schools in promoting community cohesion, as well as to the foundations of foundation schools[4].

The guidance:

§ Explains what is meant by community cohesion; and

§ Describes how a school can contribute to community cohesion, outlining the work that many schools already do to promote community cohesion as a basis for all schools to consider what they already do and what more might be needed.

[1] Education Act 2002, Section 78

[2] Race Relations Amendment Act 2000

[3] The Education and Inspections Act 2006 inserted a new section 21(5) to the Education Act 2002 introducing a duty on the governing bodies of maintained schools to promote community cohesion.

[4] Under a duty to promote community cohesion under section 23A(6) of the Education Act 2002.

The Schools Linking Project has developed organically over the past six years into a model, which supports schools across Bradford to develop working partnerships, so that children from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds, who would not normally meet, because they live and attend schools in different parts of the district, have the opportunities to meet, work and play together. The schools work on planned themes throughout the year and work in partnership with creative practitioners to provide exciting and inclusive activities. During the past year the DCSF has provided funding for the SLN to share the project with 40 pilot local authorities enabling them to establish a Schools Linking Project within their own context, one of which was Hull City Council.

How the project began in Hull

Clare Daybell, Equalities & Community Cohesion Manager of CYPS, first introduced the project at the Primary & Secondary Heads Meetings in September 2008 and most heads expressed a firm interest in being involved in the project and, following her appointment as Schools Linking Project Manager in October 2008, Jo Harding then contacted every Hull school to outline the aims and objectives and request a firm commitment to the project. The first CPD event for teachers was organised for early December and, at that point, each of the co-ordinators from the 20 schools involved (15 Primary, 1 Special and 4 Secondary schools) met their partner school for the first time. The training event looked at defining the community cohesion duty and Ofsted inspection criteria, an overview of a typical year, planning identity work, exchanging information, reflection & evaluation, looking at ways to develop linking, dealing with difficult conversations and planning each linking day.

An Overview of this Linking Year

What	When
CPD Day 1	December 08
Who am I? – Identity work	December 08/January 09
Who are we? – Identity work	January 09
Where do we live? – Identity work	January 09
Recording Information	January 09
Information exchange between each pair	January 09
Meeting 1 – Neutral Venue	End January/Start February
Reflection	February
CPD Day 2	March 3rd
Meeting 2 – class visit	March
Reflection	March
Meeting 3 – class visit	April
Reflection	April
CPD Day 3	May 19th
Meeting 4 – class visit or neutral venue	End of May/beginning of June
Reflection	May/June
Meeting 5 (Celebration Event)	June 25th
Final Evaluation	July

Following the first training event, each teacher/co-ordinator went back to school and began a program of identity work, recording and exchanging information and reflection with their classes before the first meeting which were all held at neutral venues. Each pair could chose 1 venue from the following list:

- 1 Albemarle Music Centre for multi-cultural music workshops
- 2 KC Stadium for healthy lifestyle and football skills workshops
- 3 Wilberforce House Museum and WISE for Hull Truck Theatre Dance and Drama workshops

The first visit develops an awareness of Who are we? and Where do we live? as it involves a visit to a venue in our own area.

WHY DO WE USE NEUTRAL VENUES?

- Neutral territory cultivates a sense of shared ownership of facilities in our district
- Everyone is on an equal footing
- Good stimulus for the visit – can provide a basis for a shared project/theme
- Activities are led by facilitators – teachers can therefore focus on developing linking and encouraging dialogue between children

Following the first neutral venue meeting there was additional training and planning for future meetings of the pairs which were held at each other's schools. Each pair chose a focus or theme to follow for the rest of their project and many incorporated the Global Dimension into their projects.

Below are the SLP Newsletter articles from the Spring and Summer DEC Newsletters

Schools Linking Project in Hull – Spring Newsletter

The Schools Linking Project has been running for just over a term and feedback so far suggests that it is a worthwhile as well as an enjoyable experience for all involved. After canvassing Hull schools in October 2008, we selected the following schools to work in pairs as part of the project.

Bricknell Primary & Sidmouth Primary	Stepney Primary & Foredyke Primary
The Parks Primary & St Charles' RC Primary	Griffin Primary & Holy Name RC Primary
Priory Primary & Stoneferry Primary	Adelaide Primary & Parkstone Primary
Gillshill Primary & Francis Askew Primary	Maybury Primary & Northcott School
Sir Henry Cooper & Newland School for Girls	St Mary's College & Kelvin Hall School

The first Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Training Day for staff leading the project within their school was held on Wednesday 10th December 2008 at The Dennison Centre on Cottingham Road. The day was a chance for teachers to meet their partner school for the first time, to look at and understand the main issues of Community Cohesion and how Ofsted are inspecting it in schools and plan the first linking day with their partner. There was a choice of 3 venues/activities for the first meeting which were:

- KC Stadium for Healthy Lifestyles and Football Skills
- Albemarle Music Centre for Gamelan, Steel Pans & Samba music workshops
- Wilberforce House Museum & WISE for Hull Truck Theatre Dance & Drama workshops



Most of the first visits took place in January and February and were held at neutral venues so that everyone involved felt they were on an equal footing and give children a chance to visit places in our area that they may not usually get the chance to go to. All the visits were highly successful end enjoyed by all and provided a good stepping stone to developing the link with the pairs of schools.

The second CPD training day was held on Tuesday 3rd March 2009 again at The Dennison Centre and looked at evaluating the work done so far by the pairs and sharing experiences. It was great to feel a real buzz in the room when each pair shared what they had done/learned so far. We also looked at various Community Cohesion and Ofsted updates and investigated various themes/foci for the next phase of the linking year which involves each school visiting their partner school for a class to class visit. All the pairs have come up with some wonderful ideas for developing their links on their class visit days such as choir projects, investigating the Rights of the Child and Healthy Lifestyles projects.

Bricknell & Sidmouth have decided to look at Fair Trade and their first class visit took place at Bricknell Primary on Thursday 2nd April. The day started with each school participating in various ice-breaker activities to get the children mixing with and talking to children from their partner school, followed by an introduction to Fair Trade delivered by Jo Harding of the DEC. The children were then split into 3 mixed groups – the first group went out onto Chanterlands Avenue and investigated the availability of Fair Trade products in local shops and businesses, one group made Fair Trade Banana smoothies and chocolate crispy cakes and the third group designed posters to promote Fair Trade awareness. Bricknell students will visit Sidmouth School in May for the next stage of their project and then will share what they have learned, along with all the other students in the project, at Hull City Hall on Thursday 25th of June as part of “Who Do We Think We Are Week”.

St Charles’ RC Primary and The Parks Primary had their first class visit on St Patrick’s’ Day. The day began with ice-breaker activities at St Charles’ school, then to the church for a St Patrick’s Day Mass and all the children received a commemorative shamrock. The rest of the day involved a visit to the city centre and a chance to follow The Fish Trail and see some of the local landmarks. The next phase of their project will involve a visit to the Parks Primary School and a workshop provided by Paul Cookson, a performance poet.



Schools Linking Project in Hull – Summer Newsletter

The Schools Linking Project is a pilot project funded by the DCSF (Department for Children, Schools & Families) and this year has involved 20 Hull schools (15 Primary, 1 Special and 4 Secondary schools). Each school has been working in a pair with another school in a different part of the city looking at the themes of identity, community and diversity and some schools have even incorporated the global dimension into their linking work. The project has sought to promote greater community cohesion in our area, give children the opportunity to mix with children they would not normally have the chance to meet and visit places in our locale that they may never otherwise get the chance to see.



The Schools Linking Project Celebration Event was held on Thursday 25th June and was the culmination of a years work with these 20 schools. The event was a high profile affair with various local and national dignitaries present. Angie Kotler, Strategic Director of The Schools Linking Network in Bradford, delivered a keynote address at the start of the day and various Hull City Council officials were also able to attend the event. The day included presentations and performances by 10 pairs of schools on the work they have done together and children also participated in various exciting and interactive workshops throughout the rooms of City Hall. About 450 children and 120 adults were present at the event and the children and teachers really enjoyed participating in the workshops and sharing what they have done and learned during the project. It has been great to see how some attitudes have changed and we hope the results of the project show that some children in Hull now have a more balanced approach to the increasingly diverse population of Hull and a greater appreciation for the city they live in and the people that live there too.

The schools involved this year and the themes of their projects were:

Bricknell Primary & Sidmouth Primary – Fair Trade

Stepney Primary & Foredyke Primary – Healthy Lifestyle

The Parks Primary & St Charles' RC Primary – Identity & Community Project

Griffin Primary & Holy Name RC Primary – Streets Apart but Voices in Harmony (Dance and song)

Priory Primary & Stoneferry Primary – The Rights of the Child

Adelaide Primary & Parkstone Primary – Global Awareness Workshops

Gillshill Primary & Francis Askew Primary – Healthy Lifestyles

Maybury Primary & Northcott School - Healthy Lifestyles

Sir Henry Cooper & Newland School for Girls - Identity & Community Project

St Mary's College & Kelvin Hall School – Diversity & Identity Work

Evaluations

We carried out baseline and endpoint snapshot evaluations with the children involved to study any attitudinal shifts as a result of the project. The evidence indicates that children's attitudes to mixing with new people, exploring new friendships, awareness of the broader community and their confidence to explore and express their own identity and challenge prejudice have experienced a positive shift.

Quotes from teachers about the project

Priory Primary & Stoneferry Primary

We have witnessed trust and friendship developing amongst children.



St Charles' RC Primary & The Parks Primary

The project has "jump started" the whole school into new ways of working.



Bricknell Primary & Sidmouth Primary

There is now a greater understanding of themselves and others and some pupils have developed the confidence to build new relationships

Maybury Primary & Northcott Special School

Responses to meeting unfamiliar children changed in both schools but especially at Northcott with very positive results for both schools.



Newland School for Girls and Sir Henry Cooper

Respect and trust grew through involvement in the project and the adults/teachers involved have gained confidence in delivery of projects – a whole school agenda.



Francis Askew Primary & Gillshill Primary

There was recognition of a lot of commonality even though backgrounds are very different.



Stepney Primary & Foredyke Primary

A complete change in attitudes to mixing with new children and improved social interaction was witnessed.



Adelaide Primary & Parkstone Primary

The CPD training for teachers involved in the project has provided opportunities to share good practice and, through mixing a year 3 & year 5 class, has prompted the children to be more considerate of other's needs.

Kelvin Hall & St Mary's College

The students have enjoyed meeting other students and developing relationships with those of different backgrounds. They have developed better skills of empathy and are much more open minded than they were.

Griffin Primary & Holy Name RC Primary

Already the children are becoming more open to visitors or new people as a result of the project and the identity work has allowed children to increase their awareness of other children who live and go to school in Hull

Each pair of schools showed in their case studies that their project has met many of the SLN aims and objectives below

The aims and objectives of the SLN

- To develop and deepen children and young people's knowledge and understanding of identity/ies, diversity and community
- To develop skills of enquiry, critical thinking and communication
- To develop trust, empathy, awareness and respect
- To provide opportunities for children and young people to meet, build new relationships, work together and contribute to the wider community
- To provide opportunities for adults, who work with children and young people, to share good practice, increase understanding of the issues of identity and community in their districts and to broaden perspectives

Each of the schools involved this year hope to continue and develop their links further next year and we'll be looking at involving more Hull schools in the new academic year 2009-10.

For further details or the opportunity to be involved in the Hull Schools Linking Project 2009-10 please contact: Jo Harding on 01482 331484 or email

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