

In what way does diversifying the curriculum affect our community's tolerance and acceptance of one another?

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What did you plan to do and why?

I started my leadership and enquiry journey last year but once the pandemic hit in March and I became a full time, working from home, single mum, and so I chose to hit pause on my journey.

My enthusiasm and expertise in International Education and Global Citizenship is an area I have been able to lead within my school. This has led to many opportunities such as a seconded post to Glasgow's International Education Service and working with the British Council. In these positions, I have had many leadership opportunities from delivering training, writing case studies and modelling good practice, for teachers in Scotland and n European.

Another passion of mine is Learning for Sustainability and helping our learners to understand and be ready for the new world they will inherit. Some of these real world issues can be complex and overwhelming for adults so how do we make these important issues relevant and meaningful to our little people?

More than ever, we know that parental engagement leads to better outcomes for our learners. This is why parental engagement, family learning and learning at home is a key theme within our schools. Within my own establishment, we used this as a vehicle for change, with a particular focus on closing the poverty-related attainment gap. However, in this new normal, the 'school gates' have changed. How do we make ourselves as welcoming, nurturing and inclusion with our families and communities while we must stay physically apart.

Could I combine issue and involve parents in home and family learning through the use of Storyline methodology and IE themes?

How did Covid-19 affect your plan?

My project was able to adapt the home learning and involve families. Companies, such as Twinkl, gave access to family learning platforms for free and the digital platforms available to teachers to were able to allow me to share a huge range of media and give instant feedback to the learners at home.

The families enjoyed sharing their culture and learning together so I have continued this and set weekly family learning. It is stressed that this is compulsory, but something to share and to complete at the most suitable time. Families can also choose to opt out. This have been going well and the feedback has been positive.



What has happened and what are your next steps?

In partnership with WOSDEC, I have been trained in delivering Global Storylines, which combine traditional interdisciplinary methods of Storyline, with values-based research, process drama and deep reflection, to address some of these. Learners "become" characters within a community affected by a particular global issue. How will using this method of teaching affect the attitudes of staff, pupils and families?

Global Storyline is extremely powerful for learners. Pupils have described how their confidence has grown, how they feel more able to debate and discuss issues, and how they feel that the issues explored are hugely relevant and important to them.

Once schools reopened to P1-3 pupils after the Christmas lockdown, I was able to restart and review my enquiry project.

I returned to the classroom in late February and began a global storyline with 2 P1s and used connecting classrooms resources for 2 other infant classes. The P1 classes are learning about life in a farming community and issues such as Fairtrade and land grabbing. The 2 other infant classes picked a global goal they were interested in, and I have been using and modifying resources from British Council Connecting Classrooms website, to make these age appropriate for the learners.

As a whole school community, we continued to celebrate our different cultures and community. We had a virtual Chinese New Year celebration, celebrated International Women's Day, discussed our traditions for Shrove Tuesday and recognised the many different languages spoken within our school community on Mother Tongue Day.

Our p5 classes are part of a Connecting Classrooms cluster and our school has been paired with a school in Bethlehem. With the class teachers in both schools, myself and my Palestinian counterpart met virtually to discuss a community project. Our learners are also taking part in a penpal exchange and with have a buddy in each country. We are at the very beginning of this journey and are excited to see where it will go.

What are the implications?

This year, as a member of staff who is not class committed, I have had to quickly change and adapt plans and take classes at very short notice. This has sometimes put me out with my comfort zone. This has helped to make me less dependant on traditional teaching plans and to foster a more pupil led environment. Watching the children take a led in their learning and using my skills as an educator to help them explore and be curious, while still making sure that learners as achieving to the best of their ability, has been very rewarding and something I will continue to use in the future. My enquiry project is ongoing. I am seeing more diverse texts and subjects being introduced across our school. Pupils are happy to share their culture and language. I'm hoping as the restrictions continue to wind down, we will be able to share more as a community and I will be able to restart our pupil voice group, Language Ambassadors.

For me, self care and mental wellbeing have been a big part of my development. Asking for help when needed and learning to accept that although I can do anything, I can't do everything! In turn, I feel this has helped me to be a more reflective teacher.

How has this impacted on your leadership learning?

Teacher leadership is many things. It is reflecting on your influence and looking at ways to better your skills and attributes as a teacher. This does not always mean a management position. Teacher leadership is something we all owe. I think there can be an attitude that leading something in schools means you aspire to management, but this is not always the case. The things I lead are subjects and areas I am passionate about and enjoy sharing with pupils, staff and families.

As part of the Glasgow run course, we have been asked to read and reflect upon leadership and given reading from two texts – Effective School Leaders by John MacBeath and Leadership Matters 3.0 by Andy Buck. The chapter in Andy Buck's book about influencing others particularly resonated with me. This is leadership is me. Influencing others in a positive way to get the best for our learners.

References

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