

INSIDE

OUT

Starting out

Our primary school is in a valleys town with approximately 350 children on roll, from Nursery to year six including a KS2 learning support class for pupils with ASD. I am a teacher in the Learning Support Class for children with ASD. In 2017 I was also given the role of 'healthy schools officer' and completed the work involved in gain our Phase 3 Healthy Schools award. Our head teacher passed on information about the RSE professional learning programme and the creative audit which has become the focus for working towards phase 4 of the healthy school award.

School

Primary school, with specialist Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) unit.

Creative audit participants

12 young people (Year 6), 33 members of staff.

Creative audit activities

What Jars You?;
Mapping UNESCO key themes;
Stop/Start plates;
Diversity street;
Learning walk.

Making RSE Matter

Inside Out;
What Makes a Good Friend?

My creative audit

Panic!

The first thing I did after coming back from the first two days of the professional learning programme was panic! I felt overwhelmed and confused by the task ahead. I had been given 1.5 hours to work with staff at my school at an inset day and a morning session with some year 6 children and I couldn't see how I was going to cover everything that I had learnt at the two training days. I contacted Emma and Ester who encouraged me to start small and focus on one of the UNESCO key concepts.

I felt overwhelmed and confused...
so I started small and focused on one of the
UNESCO concepts - relationships.

One concept at a time: Relationships

First I met with staff. I started the session using a range of clips from adverts and films to spark discussion and open up conversations around RSE themes.

In particular I focused on relationships, gender identity and gender expression, equality and equity. I played the McCain 2018 advertising campaigns 'We are family' and 'Here's to love', trailers from the films *Wonder* and *The Boy in the Dress* and a clip from the *Wonder Years*.



In and out of our comfort zones

Next I gave an overview of what's happening with RSE in Wales and did the *What jars you?* activity to explore teachers' questions and concerns about RSE. This was followed by an introduction to the eight **UNESCO concepts**, which I laid out on large sheets of paper on the floor, one concept per sheet. I gave my colleagues post-it notes and asked them to use them to map current practice across the school across the 8 concepts. We finished the session doing the STOP / START plates activity.

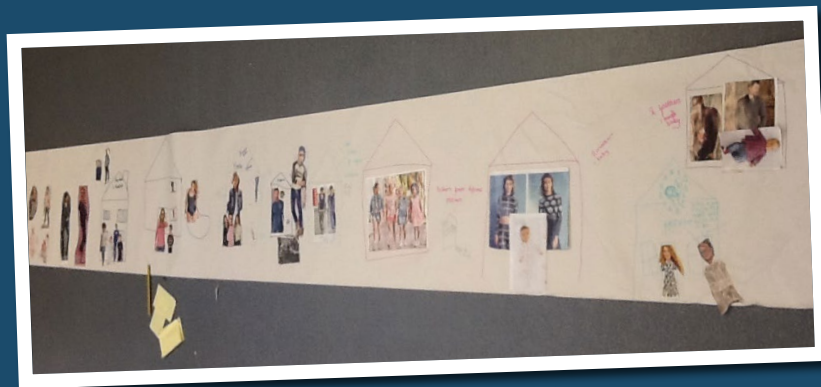
Feedback from staff about
the session was very positive.
Staff seemed to realise they need to
move out of their comfort zones.

There were some concerns and questions were raised about reactions from parents, the age appropriateness of some topics and how to address some of the difficult issues that we know some of the children are experiencing in their lives.

My creative audit

Diversity Street

With the children I started with the same set of clips that I had used with staff, which were a great hook to spark thoughts and discussion. I decided to focus on one of the UNESCO themes (Relationships), rather than trying to map all of them as I had done with staff.



I created an activity called **Diversity Street** where I rolled out a long piece of paper and asked the children to design a street that housed as many family and relationship variations as they could think of. They cut out pictures from catalogues and drew their own houses and families to create the sheet. I was amazed by the diverse identities and relationships that they chose to include. Next the children re-wrote the first UNESCO topic (Relationships) in their own words and used this to audit what they had learnt in school so far.

I created an activity called diversity street - I was amazed by the identities and relationships that they chose to include.

Relationships Learning Walk

We did a learning walk around school taking photos of displays where the different Relationship topics were being covered. We also mapped the other UNESCO themes. Children were more able to think outside the box than staff and could identify a number of extracurricular activities that matched the themes. For example the time when boys played the parts of the ugly sisters and girls played the parts of Joseph and Simba in school productions.

What do we want to Stop and Start to make RSE better

We finished the session thinking about what the children would like to STOP and START when it comes to RSE at our school using red and green slips of paper. Feedback on the session was very positive and the children didn't want the session to end. The children were very open-minded and comfortable talking about the issues raised. There were some initial 'gasps' from 1 or 2 children after other pupils used terms like 'transgender' but it sparked good conversations.

They keep asking me 'when we are going to meet up again!'

STOP

Portraying the idea of a 'normal' family or relationship
Gender stereotyping through stories, activities and roles

START

Bringing more sexuality and gender education into lessons across the curriculum

STOP

Being so awkward when people bring up transgenders

START

Being more flexible in learning
Making us good lessons!

Children

Teachers

Making it Matter

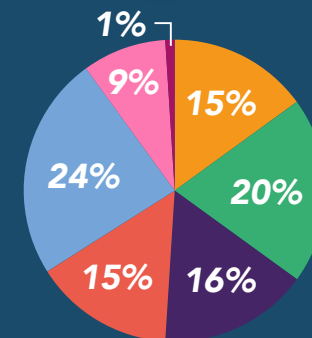
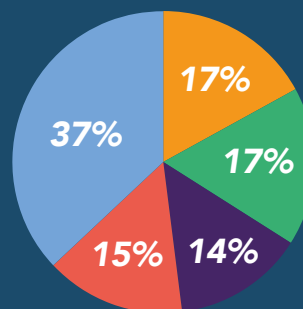
Minding the gap with post-its and pie-charts

From the data collected and general feedback from staff and children during the initial creative audit sessions, it is apparent that we have a huge emphasis on developing skills for health and well-being in our school, with lots of interventions and strategies in class and around the school.

Staff and children both think that we are an inclusive school, promoting equality for all abilities, needs and backgrounds.

To try and understand where the gaps in our provision are, I organised the post-it notes that children and staff had created during the UNESCO mapping exercise into a table form. I also counted each post-it comment and converted the results into pie charts to create a clear image of which areas are covered well in our school and where there are gaps.

Staff mapping of current practice using UNESCO key concepts



Year 6 pupils mapping of current practice using UNESCO key concepts



More on sexuality, sexual health and puberty

From the charts I could also see from this that we do quite a lot on some areas such as Skills for Health and Wellbeing, Values, culture, rights and sexuality and Understanding gender, but very little on other areas relating to sexuality, sexual health and puberty.

This is perhaps unsurprising, particularly given the level of unease and apprehension from staff that I felt during the staff audit about moving forward with some of these areas. It is also clear that we need to do more work in this area as a school, not least because we have had several cases of girls starting their periods before the 'nurse visit' in Year 6. As a result we will be introducing puberty lessons from year 5 initially, moving on to starting in year 4.

Building our RSE provision: an action research project

Addressing relationships, violence and staying safe

Having completed the creative audit I shared the findings with colleagues and parent governors.

Having seen the findings, my colleagues in the Health and Wellbeing AOLE decided we should develop the work as part of an action research project we had been tasked with completing as a pioneer school. We decided to continue to explore the theme of Relationships and to also explore the theme of Violence and Staying safe. This is in recognition of the large number of children at our school who have experienced domestic abuse at home, some of whom have been placed on the child protection register, taken into care, sought refuge or who have had police involvement. Because of this we felt that it was particularly important for our children to have a good understanding of healthy and unhealthy relationships and of safety and support strategies.

Working with external agencies and INSET twilight sessions

I met with the Healthy Schools Officer who offered additional training, support and resources

To support our project I met with the Healthy Schools Officer who offered additional training, support and resources for my AOLE colleagues and I attended a PDR twilight INSET training with our neighbouring Welsh medium primary school, who are also developing RSE across the school for their Healthy Schools award. We also had a whole staff twilight PDR training with the Healthy Schools Team.

Picture-Survey informing creative RSE pedagogy

We decided to start our project with a simple survey of children to find out about their ideas about families, friendships, healthy and unhealthy relationships. We used a pictorial questionnaire for reception children and a more in-depth online survey for year 6. This gave us a baseline understanding from which to plan and deliver a range of activities over the next two terms.

Exploring emotions and relationships creatively

Our focus has been on stories, film-clips, songs, movement and art to explore feelings and to develop children's communication skills around their emotions.

Key emotions we have explored include feeling safe/unsafe, loved/unloved, controlled/in-control. We have also been supporting the pupils to recognise the signs of an unhealthy relationship to have the courage to speak to a trusted friend or adult if they have concerns about themselves or someone they care about. We have worked with my ASD class and the reception class, which is led by another member of the Health and Wellbeing AOLE.

Inside out

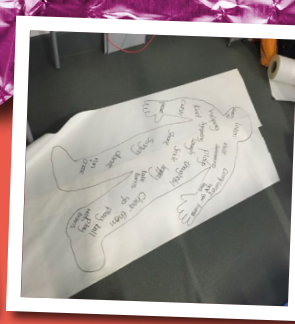
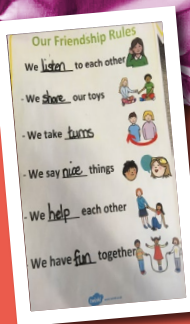
We watched the *Inside Out* film as a way of opening up discussions about emotions. I brought in the character toys from the film for us to use in the classroom and the children drew the characters or coloured pictures of them in. We named the emotions and the characters and then thought about other words for emotions such as sadness, joy and anger. We had a therapeutic arts degree student working with us and she did some art-based activities around emotions and colour associations. We took photos of the children pulling different faces and expressing different emotions and used this to talk about how we feel in different situations and when we are with different people. Finally the children drew portraits in the style of Picasso that captured some of the emotions we had been exploring.



Towards a living curriculum

At the end of the project we repeated the questionnaire and found the results to be encouraging. We have noticed that the children are more engaged and are more able to make connections between the curriculum and their own lives.

During the activities, Reception children became more enthusiastic to contribute their ideas, and were more articulate when doing so. Children in the ASD class responded well to the characters from the film and using art as a medium to communicate their ideas. This also led to an improvement in their use of vocabulary.



What is a good friend?

We talked about friendship, what makes a good friend and what we like about other people. We drew around children in the class and wrote lots of words about friendship around the 'bodies'. I read out short scenarios with pictures to show different situations and people reacting in different ways. We sorted the pictures into 'Good friend/Not a good friend'. We made salt dough people and talked to them about what we think a good friend is and finally we came up with a set of class rules to show how to be a good friend.

What's next?

Rolling out our cross-curricular RSE: Slow and steady

We are going to continue to develop this area of work as a way of supporting personal and social development in the school. Our plan is to roll out the ideas across the school, beginning with the friendship activities as a safe way in for children and staff. It's been a slow process for us and there is still lots of work to do. We also have various curriculum councils as well as the school council, comprised of small groups of pupils from Y2-Y6 who meet regularly to discuss issues and set targets. This cross-curricular approach will enable pupils to bring up a range of issues and topics to be addressed, hopefully including relationships and sexuality.