

# **VICTORIA PRIMARY SCHOOL BALLYHALBERT** **POLICY FOR PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING**

*An inclusive, imaginative and inspiring Learning Community where everyone can be safe, healthy, happy and successful together.*



## **Introduction**

Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU) is a statutory requirement of the NI Curriculum. We understand that PDMU does not begin or end at Victoria Primary School. The environment created in our school is only part of the wider world that children inhabit. We know that children are greatly influenced by society's values – especially by religious beliefs, parental views, the media and their peers. Therefore, PDMU provision is most effective when it is based on a consistent approach and where the responsibility is shared by parents, teaching and non-teaching staff, children, health professionals, relevant external agencies and the local and wider communities. Close consultation with these 'partners in education' needs to be an essential element of the planning, implementation, evaluation and review of any PDMU programme of study.

## **Aims of PDMU**

The curriculum sets out a single board aim for education: 'To empower young people to develop their potential and to make informed and responsible decisions throughout their lives.'

PDMU is one of the six areas of learning in the Northern Ireland Curriculum (CCEA 2007), and it will permeate through all curricular areas, thus having a positive impact on the teaching and learning within our school. It focuses attention on children's emotional development, health and safety, relationships with others and development of moral thinking, values and actions.

## **Statement of Intent**

We intend to:

- Deliver PDMU through the two interconnected strands and teach and explore all nine statutory statements of minimum requirement, from foundation stage to year 7.
- Integrate the "Living. Learning. Together Programme" to help support the teaching and learning of PDMU.
- Integrate the PATHS Programme for Schools (UK) to help support the teaching and learning of PDMU. The PATHS programme is designed to facilitate the development of self-control, emotional awareness and interpersonal problem solving skills.
- Help the children to learn about themselves, how they fit into society, how they learn and how they deserve to be respected and valued.
- Develop children's self-esteem, self-confidence and self-worth.
- Provide the children with the necessary skills to help them manage their feelings and emotions.
- Encourage our children to be motivated and ambitious young people with a desire to succeed.
- Promote Personal Capabilities and Thinking Skills.

- Ensure that all children are aware of the dangers in our society eg. drugs, alcohol, bullying, abuse etc ...
- Promote good relationships with family, friends and future colleagues.
- Promote working as an individual, in pairs and in groups, to encourage the children to develop their own ability to express themselves in a variety of ways.
- Encourage children to follow a healthy lifestyle and to keep safe.
- Understand why rules are needed, how to act responsibly and how to deal with conflict effectively.
- Develop an awareness of peoples' similarities and differences, be respectful of peoples' beliefs and cultures and be aware of the diversity in our society.
- Encourage the children to become moral and just citizens, taking responsibility for their own actions and understanding how ones' actions can impact on society.
- Encourage children to show patience and tolerance towards others.

Through PDMU we will develop pupils:

- Self-confidence and self-esteem as individuals and as a spiritual appreciation of their uniqueness;
- Insights into their own emotions, attitudes and moral values and how they are formed;
- Understanding of the benefits and the importance of a healthy lifestyle
- Insights into society, other cultures and the environment, our interdependence and the need for mutual understanding and respect;
- Their ability to use these insights to contribute to relationships, family life, the local and global community and the environment; and
- An awareness of the immense value of personal and interpersonal skills in future life and employment contexts.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **The Role of the Principal**

The Principal will promote the development of PDMU. In consultation with all staff, he/she will decide on how the subject is to be implemented into the daily life of the school and how he/she sees its development through all areas of the curriculum. The Principal will encourage the training of all staff, offer support and liaise with the Board of Governors.

### **Subject Leader Responsibilities**

The Subject Leader will monitor and review the subject's progression and implementation and will promote the development of PDMU in school.

### **How will PDMU be delivered?**

Personal Development and Mutual Understanding will be delivered as an individual area of learning on a weekly basis. It will support our ethos within the school, and it will support all aspects of teaching and learning in Victoria Primary School.

### **Methodology**

As Personal Development & Mutual Understanding is about the development of values and attitudes, it is important children have an opportunity to develop these naturally as a consequence of their investigations and reflection on issues. As we all learn in different ways a range of learning styles and teaching strategies will be employed

related to active learning. These approaches will emphasise group and collaborative strategies, maximising opportunities for pupil input, decision-making and problem-solving. At Victoria PS PDMU lessons will be conducted in a non-judgemental atmosphere. The teacher, as facilitator, will create and maintain a safe and secure environment for children to express their thoughts and ideas. Empathetic relationships based on mutual respect will be developed to create a place where fears and concerns can be expressed openly without risk of ridicule or reproach. Children are encouraged to talk about and reflect upon activities and situations which they have been involved in. Teaching and learning approaches are focused on the systematic and purposeful development of the whole person with emphasis on the active and participatory involvement of pupils in the learning process. Lessons presented will follow an issue based approach and will explore pupils' and society's attitudes and beliefs.

In line with our commitment to this learning area, each year group will have a timetabled period of Personal Development & Mutual Understanding each week.

Personal Development has two strands:

\*Personal Understanding and Health;

\*Mutual Understanding in the Local and Global Community;

**Teachers will deliver PDMU using the Living, Learning Together Programme.**

Pupils will acquire skills and knowledge of the following nine statutory statements within the two strands:

1. Self-awareness
2. Feelings and Emotions
3. Learning to Learn
4. Health, Growth and Change. 4a. Safety
5. Relationships
6. Rules, Rights and Responsibilities
7. Managing Conflict
8. Similarities and Differences
9. Learning to live as members of the community

Personal Development has at its core the development of values and attitudes, it is extremely important that children have an opportunity to develop these naturally as a consequence of their investigations and **guided critical reflection on issues**. Learning should therefore be **active**, with children being encouraged to **investigate issues for themselves**, to **suggest solutions** and to **make decisions** based on what they have learned.

As strand 2 of Personal Development focuses on aspects of the local community, children should have experiences of activities involving the investigation and exchange of ideas about a local community issue especially those reflecting cultural difference, in at least one of the following ways:

\*within the school, complemented by relevant visitors or visits; and/or

\*within the school, enhanced by **communication between schools**, with the possibility of joint visits to a common venue or to each others' schools;

**\*joint work** between schools, involving, for example, *shared education visits, residential, fieldwork or international contact*; (where appropriate the focus for the joint work could be related to the global dimension, for example, an action project around a global issue).

There are a number of useful strategies for creating a safe, secure environment that encourages participation and models democratic values.

These include:

- \*circle work;
- \*active-listening skills;
- \*co-operative games; and
- \*ground rules/contracts or a classroom charter.
- \*use active and participatory learning methods;
- \*follow an issues-based approach.

### **Assessment**

When assessing children's Personal Development and Mutual Understanding we recognise personal rates of development cannot be standardised therefore when assessing and reporting we take account of and reflect each child's current strengths and developmental needs.

Assessment of Personal Development and Mutual Understanding is concerned with:

- \*knowledge and understanding;
- \*a child's ability to demonstrate the skills that are being learned and practised.

### **Cross Curricular Links**

PDMU has strong links with other areas of learning:-

The Arts:

- Help children to explore ways of expressing themselves through drama, music, art and design.

Language and Literacy:

- Help children to develop vocabulary to discuss emotions and feelings through talking and listening, reading, independent writing, drama and role play situations.

Physical Education:

- Encourages children to adopt a healthier lifestyle.
- Develops teamwork, and an awareness of fairness.

The World Around Us:

- Helps children to understand other cultures, places and times.
- Develop an awareness of one's talents, thoughts and feelings.

### **Special Educational Needs and Equal Opportunities**

All children have the right to learn and develop as individuals at school. At Victoria Primary we aim to teach our young children how to become confident and responsible citizens who can demonstrate tolerance, respect and understanding of others.

### **In-Service Training**

Identified in-service training will be undertaken in line with the school's development plan.

### **Monitoring**

Victoria Primary School recognises and accepts the importance of monitoring and evaluating all aspects of the delivery of the PDMU curriculum. To this end we follow the procedures for self-evaluation as outlined in the DE document 'Together Towards Improvement'. We also follow the schools monitoring schedule.

### **Related School Policies**

This Policy is set within the broader school context of the Curriculum and Pastoral Care therefore it should be read in conjunction with the following school Policies:

- Pastoral Care Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Misuse of Drugs/Substances Policy
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy

### **Useful Websites:**

[www.schoolcouncils.org](http://www.schoolcouncils.org)  
[www.circle-time.co.uk](http://www.circle-time.co.uk)  
[www.unicef.org.uk](http://www.unicef.org.uk)  
[www.niccy.org](http://www.niccy.org)  
[www.bhf.org.uk](http://www.bhf.org.uk)  
[www.careinthesun.org](http://www.careinthesun.org)  
[www.wiredforhealth.gov.uk](http://www.wiredforhealth.gov.uk)  
[www.niccurriculum.org.uk](http://www.niccurriculum.org.uk)  
[www.trocaire.org](http://www.trocaire.org)

### **Evaluation and Review**

This document is freely available to the entire school community and will be reviewed regularly.

**Signed – Chair of Governors:** \_\_\_\_\_ S.A. McFerran

**Signed – Principal:** \_\_\_\_\_ S. Weir

**Date:** March 2020

**Review Date:** 2023