

Learning for Life and Work

Employability

Case Study

Larne Grammar School

Implementing Key Stage 3 Employability

General Context

Employability supports the thrust of the revised curriculum. The programme helps to:

- empower young people to make informed and responsible choices throughout their lives;
- enable young people to develop as individuals, contributors to society and contributors to the economy and the environment.

Employability becomes statutory for Years 8 and 11 in 2007 and for other year groups thereafter.

Employability and School Aims and Objectives

Larne Grammar School is currently reviewing its school aims and objectives in light of the revised curriculum. Employability is seen as contributing towards the following proposed school objectives:

- 'To help young people develop as a contributor to society'
- 'To help young people develop as a contributor to the economy and environment'
- 'To help young people develop ...skills and capabilities'

Larne Grammar School Context

Larne Grammar is a co-educational grammar school with 760 pupils and an intake of 110 into Year 8.

Prior to introducing the Employability programme, Larne Grammar provided a six week module of Careers classes as part of the Year 10 PSHE provision-largely aimed at helping pupils prepare for GCSE subject choice.

Larne Grammar school joined the second cohort of the Key Stage 3 (Employability) Pilot programme in 2003.

Personnel

The Curriculum Vice-Principal circulated all staff to ascertain those interested in contributing to the delivery of Employability. Currently, all the staff who expressed an interest are involved in delivering the programme. As a quality mechanism, it was determined at the outset that only those members of staff interested in delivering the programme and trained to do so, would be deployed in the Employability programme. Six teachers are involved in delivering KS3 Employability: the teachers are from Careers, Business Studies and Year Head backgrounds. The insight from the Business Studies teachers has been useful in interpreting the areas of 'Enterprise and Entrepreneurship' and the 'Local and Global Economy'.

Timetable

To demonstrate progression in Employability it was felt to be crucial to allocate space throughout Years 8 -10. To incorporate the revised curriculum Larne Grammar has recently implemented a system of twenty minute periods. Currently, Years 8, 9 and 10 have 40 minutes of timetabled Employability each week (two x 20 minutes periods).

Resources and Training

All staff involved in delivering the Employability programme participated in the INSET training provided by the North Eastern Education and Library Board (NEELB): this training enabled the sharing of best practice with other schools. The Council for the Curriculum Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) provided abundant resources for the programme and being a part of the pilot, has enabled the school to customise the materials for their own pupils.

Methodologies

As with all aspects of the revised curriculum, the means of delivery is important in reinforcing learning and relevance. The Employability lessons deploy active learning and are skills integrated. The pupils are asked to investigate, to problem solve and have numerous

opportunities to use ICT for both research and presentation. A sample of a lesson sequence from the Year 8 pilot materials are shown below.

Section	Lesson	Learning Objectives	Teaching and Learning Activities	Skills & Development Opportunities	Resources
4 Career Planning (2)	24/25/26 Research Skills	By the end of this lesson pupils will be able to: Access appropriate information in relation to given jobs Demonstrate the ability to handle information appropriately Present the information in the form of a leaflet	Discuss/remind pupils of appropriate sources of information. Brainstorm – What type of information is required in a job study? Introduce pupils to careers library and CID Teacher demonstration of researching job using CID ----- In pairs pupils randomly select a job using job cards from lesson 1 Pupils research job and prepare leaflet ----- Produce leaflet	Research Skills ICT skills Presentational skills	Access to library 'Careers Information database'(CID) Job study Internet Using job cards (lesson 1), put into job families Example leaflet (can be produced using Publisher wizard, or Word, or A4 page folded in 3)

Business and Community Links

Larne Grammar utilise the experience of a local entrepreneur in Year 10. In the context of the Employability programme they are also planning to incorporate this expertise and know-how in the Year 9 programme.

Links with Progress File

Larne Grammar School is exploring ways of integrating Employability with the Progress File material- specifically the 'Getting Started' resource for Years 8 -10.

Pupil and Staff Experiences

Pupil response has been very encouraging. Pupils have stated that they understand the relevance of Employability and enjoy the active and varied learning activities. They have reported that they appreciate the relevance of transferable skills. During the KS3 programme the pupils have: identified their own skills and qualities; planned to achieve a goal; investigated jobs in their locality; found out about famous and local entrepreneurs; questioned adults in the 'hot seat' activity; used web based and software packages; researched subject choices for GCSE.

The teaching staff has also responded very positively to the programme: those involved find the programme an enjoyable teaching experience.

Parental Reaction

Parents have responded in a very positive manner. At consultations they are keen to know more about the Employability programme and are impressed by both its early inclusion in the secondary timetable and its content.

Issues and Challenges

Larne Grammar School has identified the following issues and challenges:

- *Staffing* – as the programme expands into Year 11 and 12 staffing may become more challenging.
- *Implementing Employability in KS4* - this will involve a strategic look at the current Careers provision and the statutory Employability provision in order to structure the optimum means of delivery.
- *Links with business and the community* – finding ways to broaden and deepen the links.
- *The relationship between the Head of Careers and the Employability provision* – the best way to manage a curriculum strand which embraces Years 8-12.
- *Individual guidance* - how best to deliver the individual guidance necessary for young people to help them make the decisions which the Employability programme has signposted.
- *Technological mismatch* - certain parts of the Employability programme are technology rich, requiring access to multiple PCs, which is difficult to accommodate with resources in schoolrooms.
- *Adapting lessons for the pupils* - the published resources do sometimes need to be adapted for best use with the pupils of the school.