

Case Study:

Waterfoot Primary School, Waterfoot, Rossendale

– A link between the two sites of the amalgamated school, Cloughfold Site and Waterfoot Site

School Background:

The school was amalgamated in September 2007 but until it moves into the new building in two years' time, is operating at two sites, namely the Cloughfold Site and Waterfoot, which are about a mile apart. Cloughfold Site is a small school of approximately 50 pupils from a diverse range of ethnic backgrounds. Meanwhile the Waterfoot site has about 296 pupils of mainly white British origin.

Main Contrasts:

Mono-cultural/ethnically diverse

Large/small school

Main Themes:

UK diversity

Identity – Who am I? Who are you? What similarities and differences do we have?

Pupil evaluations:

(re first linking day)

'It was nearly the best thing that has happened to me in my life'

'I liked meeting my buddy'

Teacher evaluations:

'The pupils are better prepared for coming together.'

'The staff and children from both sites enjoyed the whole experience and have developed a greater understanding of each others' views and feelings.'

'It has helped to create a bond between ...the staff of the 2 sites, the children have gained a sense of their own identity, that of their class mates and their school. The children have learnt skills of collaboration and co-operation, and social skills involved in meeting new people.'

Curriculum Links:

PSHE

Art

Literacy

Geography

PE

Main reasons for the success:

'The commitment and enthusiasm of the staff and pupils.'

'The worthwhile activities developed during the planning stage.'

Aims:

To gain a better understanding of each school.

To prepare the schools for coming together in the new joint school site.

Why Waterfoot wanted link:

Having attended the School Linking in Diversity Education (SLIDE) Conference in June 2007, a teacher from Waterfoot Primary School in Rossendale, contacted the SLIDE project to ask for support in a link which would help bring the two sites together prior to amalgamation. Not only was there the diversity in terms of ethnicity and size of schools to explore but also it was seen as an opportunity for the pupils and staff to get to know each other more through meaningful and fun activities. The first step was for the two lead teachers from each site to meet during their PPA time to discuss what each school wanted from the project and how they were going to plan for the linking activities across the curriculum that year. This was facilitated by the SLIDE project worker. At this meeting dates were set for when the children were going to meet up and what the focus of these linking days was going to be.

Activities

Spring Term:

- Initially an activity based on photos taken in various African countries and the UK, in order to try and capture the children's awareness of the diversity of the UK. The children used yes and no cards to show whether they thought the photo was taken in this country or another country. They then discussed their reasons for their vote and chose one of the activities featured which were similar and different to activities that they do.
- The children then explored their own sense of identity and represented what was important to them on the outlines of their hands. These were then sent to their partners and the similarities and differences were discussed. All the hands were displayed together to show the school 'linking hands'.
- The children then began to explore their school community and made a photo book for their partners which introduced who they were, what their school was like and the routines they have. These were then swapped and quickly became the favourite books in the book corner!
- Throughout the term both schools learnt a range of street games from around the world whilst also finding out a little about each country. These were from the pack 'The Games We Play, Manchester DEP. These games are fun, simple, require very few resources, share similarities with many traditional games from the UK and importantly develop the children's collaborative skills.



Summer Term:

- The children came together at the Cloughfold site to finally meet their partners. Children from Cloughfold welcomed their visitors and showed them around. There was time for them to meet their special 'buddies' with whom they had been communicating and get to know about each other. They then played together the global games they had been learning before enjoying a drink and a biscuit.
- Both classes managed to brave the Blackpool wind when they went on a joint trip to the seaside as part of their topic. The children were able to take part in activities with their new friends and have more time to start to get to know each other better.
- Finally, the classes presented all that they had been doing in their link project to the rest of the school at the Waterfoot site. They showed their hands, photo books and demonstrated the games they had learnt. They had even learnt a song describing all about why their school was 'the best'!

