

The Community Relations

- **I***nterdependence*
- **N**
- **D***iversity*
- **E***quity*
- **X**

Self-evaluation tools & frameworks for schools, classrooms and other educational settings

by

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INTRODUCTION

Why?

In the wake of the Good Friday or Belfast Agreement, the Department of Education in Northern Ireland was prompted to state its position with respect to the responsibilities of public institutions. The Culture of Tolerance Report (DENI, 1999) suggested that it was time to reinvigorate the work of the education services to help create a more tolerant society, and to regard the development of respect for diversity as a core rather than peripheral element of the school curriculum.

The Chief Inspector of the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) recently identified a number of strengths and areas for improvement within education, training and youth work. She remarked:

“ In my previous report, I drew attention to many strengths in education, training and youth work in Northern Ireland. I also identified the need for more attention to be given to certain key recurring themes and areas for improvement including ... monitoring and evaluation ... and assisting young people to respond effectively to life in Northern Ireland’s still troubled society. In the period from 2002-2004, evidence from inspection indicates that, whilst increased attention has been given to these matters... further work is required if the necessary improvements are to be made. There remains the formidable challenge represented by the ongoing divisions within Northern Ireland ... I believe that those involved in education, training and the youth service should consider again how best to assist young people overcome those deep manifestations of sectarianism and racism which can make life here so problematic”

The Chief Inspector continued:

“ I believe that inspection should continue to promote self-evaluation and self- improvement and that inspection reports should give increased emphasis to an organisation’s capacity for both”

(The Chief Inspector’s Report, 2005, pps 3 & 4)

Who?

The community relations index incorporates a range of evidence-based frameworks and tools designed to help teachers, teacher educators and school-attached professionals undertake a deep scrutiny of everything that makes up institutional life in order to improve school-based provision for community relations. We recognise that all social policies contain implicit or explicit ideas about the value systems, moral codes and everyday lives of the people to whom they relate. With regard to school-based community relations, we understand this to carry the explicit expectation that, as part of their teaching, teachers will attempt to address issues relevant to community divisions in N. Ireland. Consequently, we define school-based community relations as purposeful activity, through the whole -curriculum and whole-school experience, that facilitates young peoples' identities as citizens:

- who are accepting of equity and non-oppression in the civil domain, such that everybody can enjoy equally their human rights
- who are accepting of diverse ethnic identities
- who understand the central importance of, and value, interdependent relationships within N.Irish society.

What?

The frameworks and tools included in this index draw upon research into the use of school self-evaluation as an important lever for school improvement. Effective schools research has concentrated on identifying the factors making schools matched for student ability and other intake variables more effective at achieving academic and other goals (White,1997). On the other hand, MacBeath (1999) indicated that school improvement research sought to go beyond a pure effectiveness approach to ascertain how schools improved and to assist them in this process. **A widely held view amongst school improvers is that school self-evaluation is significant for bringing about improvement, although a mix of internal and external support for change may well be best (MacGilchrist, 2000).**

Reed and Street (2002) observed that the role of evaluation in school improvement had roots in evaluation thinking and literature that went back over thirty years.

However, the development of more democratic school-based evaluation discourses have tended to be overshadowed during the past decade (Reed and Street, 2002). This is because of the increased momentum in the UK, as in many Western educational systems, for the marketisation of education and reform based on standards, accountability and central Government control. Within this climate, inspection and external evaluation have taken over as the predominant way of providing and enforcing the agenda for school improvement. Furthermore, by concentrating on raising test performances on a narrow range of student outcomes, or so-called “basics”, the Government’s drive to improve standards has resulted in wider issues being kept in the background, despite some welcome rhetoric on the nature of inclusive learning and democratic citizenship.

However, proposed changes to the inspection regimes of schools in N. Ireland and England, suggest that an evaluation culture drawing creatively on the strengths of both internal and external review is now beginning to re-emerge (see ETI, 2005; DfES, 2004). As MacBeath (1999) remarked, “it was an unhealthy system that relied on the constant routine attentions of an external body to police its schools”(p, 1).

Consequently, it seems an appropriate time to develop user-friendly self-evaluation and self-improvement procedures and processes designed to improve learning-teaching for inter-communal relations.

Reed and Street (2002) cite Hopkins (1989) who identified six main characteristics of what Hopkins preferred to call school-based review:

- 1. it is a systematic process, not simply reflection;**
- 2. its short-term goal is to obtain valid information about a school’s or department’s condition, functions, purposes and products;**
- 3. the review leads to action on an aspect of the school’s organisation or curriculum;**
- 4. it is a group process that involves participants in a collegial process;**
- 5. optimally, it is a process owned by the school or sub-system;**
- 6. its purpose is school improvement/ development and its aspiration is to progress; towards the problem-solving or relatively autonomous school.**

How?: The basis of the index in evidence-based research

An impressive evidence-base concerning teacher professionalism allied to the community relations dimension of schooling has been derived from research carried out by colleagues at the UNESCO Centre, School of Education, University of Ulster (see Smith, Hartop, Kelly, Mc Cully, & O'Connor (forthcoming). One research project is particularly relevant here (see Smith, 2001 a & b; 2002; 2003; 2005; Smith & Neill, 2005). The aim of this was to inform the processes of school improvement for community relations in N. Ireland. The views of those main groups having a stake in the success of schools were explored in order to identify the key institutional characteristics influencing effectiveness and improvement. During the 1998 autumn term, nine schools were contacted and invited to take part in the study. Research contact was made with a total of 343 individuals across all schools, of which 228 were students, 87 were members of staff and 28 parents.

Methods of investigation

Data gathering was focused around three main questions:

1. what were the characteristics of the schools in terms of what they did to promote learning for inter-communal relations? Included as sub-themes were the exploration of what participants believed schools could be doing that they were not already doing, and the exploration of teachers' theories about school-based community relations work;
2. what outcomes and impact were schools perceived to have ?
3. what helped (promoted, supported) or hindered (impeded) the achievements of schools in this area?

In the primary phase, all permanent members of teaching staff were invited to take part in focus group discussions held after school. Students in their final year (year 7) who had taken part in school-based cross-community projects were chosen for interview. Parents of these year 7 children were then invited to attend interview sessions held during the evening. At the secondary stage, focus group sessions were held with team leaders, particularly those whose subjects were identified as important carriers of EMU¹, as well as key staff such as EMU Coordinators. Secondary school pupils were identified by their Principals on the basis of their potential capacity to comment on their experience and involvement with cross-community events at school. Likewise, invitations were forwarded to their parents or guardians. School visits were completed over the five-month period between February and July 1999, and research in each of the schools produced over six hours of tape-recorded interview and group discussion on the themes of this study.

¹ Following the Education Reform (NI) Order 1989, Education for Mutual Understanding (popularly known as EMU) and Cultural Heritage became closely related and statutory cross-curricular themes in the Northern Irish curriculum. Their inclusion within the statutory curriculum carried an explicit expectation that teachers would attempt to address issues relevant to community divisions within contemporary Irish society.

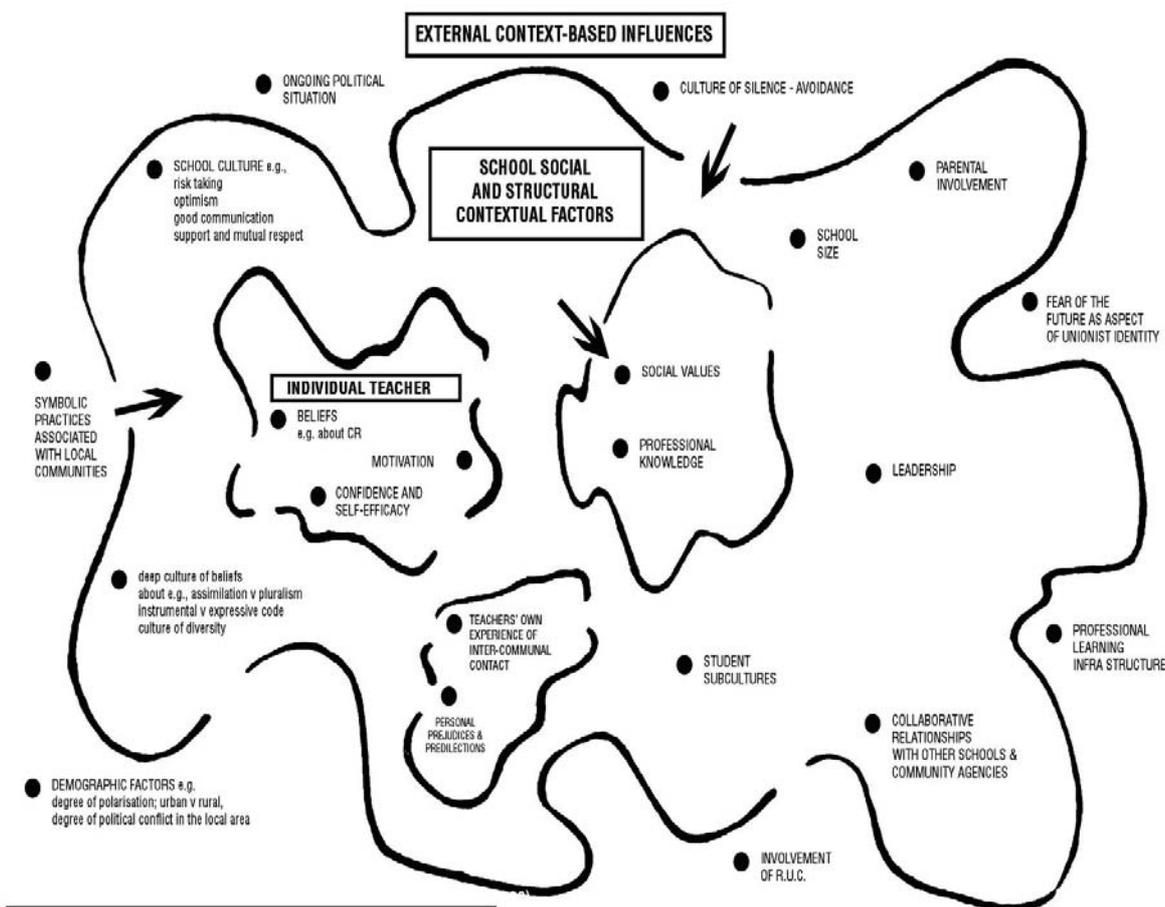


FIGURE 1: KEY ORGANISATIONAL FACTORS FOR EFFECTIVENESS AND IMPROVEMENT (after STOLL 1999)

THE FRAMEWORKS AND TOOLS

Key Organisational Factors for Improvement & Effectiveness

The underpinning research produced a substantial body of rich data that yielded important and illuminating insights concerning the factors implicated in school effectiveness and improvement for community relations. Nineteen factors or themes were identified at three levels of influence: the individual teacher, the school's social and structural learning context and the external context. These factors were found to interact in complex ways creating different patterns at different institutional sites. In order to try visually to represent this dynamism, we adapted Stoll's (1999) amoeba-like representation of the school. The spaces in this model indicate that the influences at each level interact and may not act in isolation (see figure 1 above).

Given the declared purposes behind EMU work, one extraordinary finding was the widespread absence of curriculum experiences which allowed students to discuss and reflect upon issues directly related to the N. Irish conflict and its religious or political ramifications, at least during the statutory years of schooling. This confirmed the views of commentators such as Cairns (1996) who speculated that N. Irish peace education focused too much on the individual micro-level of conflict as opposed to tackling perceptions about the collective other. Rather than focusing on intergroup issues, peace education was too "self-focused" on personal-interpersonal skills.

When given the opportunity, we found that young people in this study were well able to address controversial issues. This was in stark contrast to our observation that students and parents were rarely, if ever, asked for their opinions or views on school-based community relations policy and practice. In other words, when it came to the community relations dimension, their voices were mostly silenced, disqualified or subjugated. Furthermore, contrary to expectation, there was good support from parents for school-based work that included prejudice reduction, discussion of controversial issues and the exploration of ethnicities. This view was more prevalent amongst the urban parents of all socio-economic circumstances.

** "Due to the requirement to maintain this document at an acceptable length, it is only possible here to describe a very small number of the factors implicated in school effectiveness and improvement"*

Teachers' beliefs about community relations practice

Despite the fact that contact schemes are non-statutory, many teachers in the case study schools believed that community relations and contact were synonymous. They held onto this belief with such tenacity that it appeared to be an implicit theory

underpinning practice. As predicted by Gallagher (1995), the community relations as “contact” view tended to limit teachers’ curriculum and other perspectives on the task.

A personal-interpersonal (PSD) view of community relations also appeared to be an implicit theory underpinning practice. This assumed that the development of personal identity (self-esteem) and interpersonal relationships (teacher-pupil; pupil-pupil), via the classroom and school ethos, had a direct influence on peace and reconciliation in the wider community. This reflected a general PSD approach to community relations practice. A specific approach was exemplified by practices such as, “when teachers help to reconcile differences between children if they have a fall out in the playground”.

An unexpected finding was the extent to which teachers’ beliefs about community relations practice articulated with teacher discourse concerning discipline-indiscipline and disruptive behaviour. One of the case study schools included their “Assertive discipline”² procedures as an example of community relations practice. This association between beliefs about community relations, the social-moral stance adopted by schools in relation to students, and discipline policy, raised some interesting issues. For example, provision for citizenship and community relations could become distorted by being turned into an activity site for dealing with discipline problems. Under such circumstances, the ethos approach to community relations appeared a much less benign or suitable building block for building peace and reconciliation in the wider community.

A further set of beliefs was articulated. This was the, “Community relations as school-home-community links” view which predominantly referred to the use of the local community (including the police) as a resource for student learning. However, three of the schools reflected stronger community education and community development philosophies. The paucity of local facilities encouraged one of the Principals to organise school-based adult education provision from the school campus. As a consequence, he was able to cite numerous cross-community benefits, such as Catholic parents inviting their Protestant co-religionists to school concerts and fairs. Two schools were situated in more socially deprived and sectarian areas. The Principal of one of these articulated a “two stage theory of community relations” which was similar to the PSD view. This involved active engagement with the local community, such as “Tree planting and helping to design a play park” (stage1), and then “Hoping that, if children respected their own community they would gradually learn to respect their neighboring Catholic community” (stage 2).

However, according to Lovett et al (1995), the “Two stage theory” of community relations had a number of problematic aspects. For example, “If the community development approach only tended to increase confidence within one of the communities, then this could result in ghettosiation ... this could involve a community being confident enough to assert what it wants, but not confident enough to consider the opinions and rights of the other community- indeed, sectarian feelings could actually be heightened” (Lovett et al, 1995, p 4).

² The Assertive Discipline programme is designed to help teachers increase “on-task” behaviour and reduce behavioural difficulties in the classroom (see Canter & Canter, 1992). However, some critics such as Kohn (1993), believe that this approach is more about extrinsic control and teacher compliance than improved teacher-student communication.

Another school Principal articulated a viewpoint that involved “Building parents up so that they felt good about themselves, so that they could go out and face other people (Protestants) without fear, no longer feeling themselves second class citizens.” Clearly articulated by some other Catholic respondents, this discourse about “Second class citizenship,” linked to the real or perceived reality within sections of the Catholic community about how they had suffered historically. Consequently, it illustrated ways in which processes of schooling for community relations could become an expression of wider cultural and political aspirations (see also McEwen, 1999).

The school-home-community viewpoint linked school-based community relations activity to issues of injustice and empowerment. However, the change-orientated action associated with it still appeared to be more “self-focused” (designed to improve personal-interpersonal skills) than “collectively-orientated” (see Salmon, 1998), and not specific enough in its community relations remit. Nevertheless, it appeared to hold great promise as a foundation for more radical school-based activity that worked towards building creative cross-community networks or encouraged joint assessment over problems of mutual concern.

Adult Images of Childhood and Adolescence

Teachers’ beliefs about children’s social and cognitive abilities (or inabilities) were strongly associated with community relations outcomes. Across our case study schools, students’ understandings of the N. Irish political situation and conflict greatly exceeded the expectations of most teachers. The view of this teacher was not untypical when suggesting that, “some of them maybe (at year 7 or aged 11) would be fit for it but a lot of them would not; a lot of them would be completely lost so you might be shaping things and you could be inculcating things by approaching the subject too early”. A colleague expressed the view that it would probably be the brighter ones (year 7) that you would ever think about say, trying to explain the issue of stereotyping”. This sort of professional discourse supported Rudduck et al’s (1996) conclusion that children in school were not normally regarded as socially competent when it came to making decisions on a range of issues and this “bracketing out of their voice was founded upon an outdated view of childhood which failed to acknowledge children’s capacity to reflect on issues affecting their lives” (Rudduck et al, 1996, p.172).

Teacher prejudice

The difficult issue of communicating stereotyped and prejudiced perceptions was raised by all the groups. These discussions very often focused on the teaching of history which had a common and agreed syllabus, including an attainment target specifically designed to encourage the exploration of alternative ethnopolitical worldviews. While agreeing that this curriculum specification existed in theory, one teacher suggested that “You could still treat issues in a biased way by either evading other points of view or saying things like I’m convinced the other side was wrong; this definitely goes on and so it comes down to the individual teacher’s own political and social views.” Another agreed, “you could still put a different slant on things, you

could, for example, look at the Famine in Ireland in a particular way if you wanted to.” Two departmental heads insisted that their own colleagues fell over themselves to be objective, but conceded that this was not the case in all schools. There was good support for the idea that curriculum interpretation was down to the individual teacher since, “they were all a product of the environment” and that it was very easy to pass on preconceived social-political ideas that children were quick to pick up on.

School culture

Stoll (1999) cited Schein’s (1985) view of school culture as the deeper level of “Basic assumptions and beliefs” that operated unconsciously to define an organisation’s “View of itself and its environment”. It acted as a screen or lens through which the world was viewed (Stoll, 1999). Our study demonstrated that respondents were able to identify a number of cultural norms and dimensions associated with community relations outcomes including: professional understandings about the community relations task; professional understandings about “the ideal pupil”; sense of collaboration and community; the social and political values of staff; a social environment for students that promoted moral reasoning and prosocial (interpersonal) behaviours.

School leadership

“The attitude of the Principal and Senior Management you know, if they’re willing then it’s possible but, if they’re not it’s impossible” remarked the Garnish³ EMU coordinator. The Ferns teachers agreed, “if you don’t get encouragement from your boss at the top you may as well forget it because you’re banging your head against a brick wall”. Respondents provided much rich data confirming the importance attached to leadership and management at a number of levels e.g. local education authority; school governors; senior and middle management (see also Stoll and Riley, 1998; Smith, 1998).

The culture of silence and avoidance

The following story was told by a Protestant student about his visit to a Catholic school during the Christian festival of Lent:

“Before we went we were warned very much not to say anything about black marks on the heads of teachers or pupils; anyway, there was this Library lady who had one on her head, I couldn’t stop looking and I asked my mum and granny because I didn’t know about it and they said it had something to do with St Patrick.”

Then there was the staff in another school who referred to the difficulties of doing more cutting-edge work because “We hide behind a lot of political correctness in N.

³ The case study schools were given anonyms.

Ireland and not wanting to cause offence”. These examples were selected from a range of cross-focus-group data which illustrated what Gallagher (1998) referred to as “The all pervasive culture of silence that discouraged open discussion on the causes and consequences of division in our society”(Gallagher, 1998, p 19). By not mentioning controversial issues related to conflict value-laden issues such as politics and religion, people in everyday interaction appeared to concentrate on interpersonal or non-group related issues (Gallagher, 1998).

The Community Relations Dimension: An Institutional Map (I-MAP)

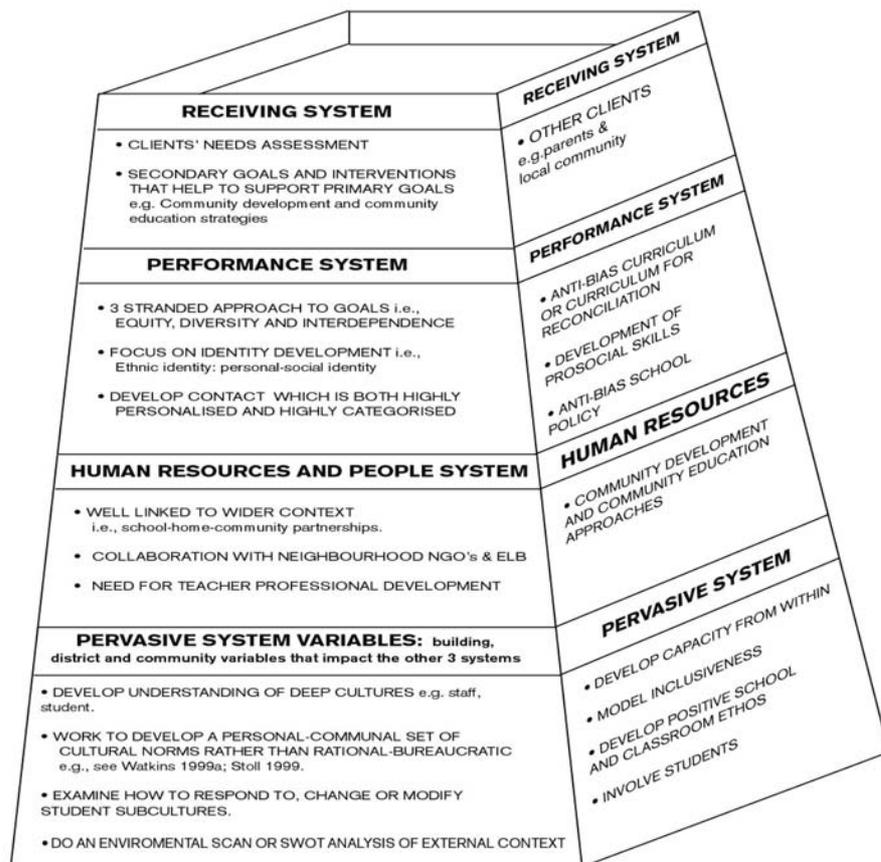


FIGURE 2: AN INSTITUTIONAL MAP TO IMPROVE EFFECTIVENESS OF SCHOOL-BASED COMMUNITY RELATIONS after KNOFF 1995.

The organisational picture revealed by this particular research project suggested that

schools in different contexts had different capacities, potentials and limits to change. The uniqueness of schools as organisations set in their own social contexts rendered problematic any notions of recipes for success. Notwithstanding, on the basis of our results, we thought it both feasible and desirable to attempt some form of analysis that would help inform school self- evaluation. In this respect, we found Knoff's (1995) model of school change very useful in making such an analysis more explicit. Knoff argued that organisational assessment, strategic planning and systems change could be greatly enhanced by recognising that organisations consisted of four operating systems, that is, the,

- Receiving system,
- Performance system,
- Human Resource & People Systems
- Pervasive System.

The I-MAP for the community relations dimension attempts to provide practitioners with a coherent framework, or roadmap, to help improve school effectiveness, taking cognisance of Knoff's organisational analysis and our key research findings (see figure 2).

The receiving system

By this, Knoff meant the primary clients (students, parents) and their identified needs; as opposed to the needs of the system. Knoff argued that change and strategic planning required organisations to analyse the real needs, goals and desires of their primary clients. In relation to this, it was clear from our research that children and young people had a great deal to offer the development of school provision designed to meet their needs. Upper primary school students in our case study schools showed a capacity to think in very sophisticated ways and were very prepared to discuss controversial issues. Yet, as one Burrens student remarked, "There's not enough systems for children's voices to be heard by adults, to say what we feel."

Knoff also suggested that organisational change and strategic planning should identify secondary goals and interventions that helped in a preventive way to support primary goals. The community development philosophy in three of our schools exemplified this. One of these schools organised community education classes on the school site which addressed issues of socio-economic exclusion and disadvantage within the local community. As a consequence of people working together to consider issues for community action, contacts were made with Protestant working class communities struggling with similar issues. In this example, community education processes helped to forge useful connections between community development and community relations.

The performance system

The performance system refers to those parts of the organisation that help it achieve its student-focused goals, that is, the school mission, aims, tasks and programmes (curriculum & pedagogic strategies). In relation to school pedagogy, for example, our results demonstrated a gulf of some proportions between the world of the classroom and the world of the academic psychologist in N. Ireland. As demonstrated, teacher practice in community relations was influenced by implicit theories that emphasised individualised strategies such as the development of personal - interpersonal skills and cross-community contact. On the other hand, for some time, psychologists in N. Ireland have rejected personalised views about prejudice and violence and have attempted, instead, to apply a social psychology of the group; in particular Social Identity Theory (SIT) (Tajfel and Turner 1986). This theory draws attention to the important disjuncture or discontinuity between personal identity aspects of self-concept (personal identity) and social identity aspects of the self. As Turner (1999) explained, in situations where social identity becomes salient, a change in the level and context of the self occurs whereby people categorise themselves as a group member in contrast to other groups; this is a change from the “I” to the “We”. Under such circumstances, what predicts prejudice is not personality, but the taken-for-granted stories and discourses concerning who is “in” (one of us) and who is “out” (one of them) that forms part of the cultural calculus within specific communities (Turner, 1999).

This has implications for organisational change. School provision needs to take a multi-dimensional view of identity. Unless school-based practice challenges the sectarian attitudes and beliefs that children already hold, then it will be impotent. As can be seen from figure 2, at the time of our research, we referred to this as a Curriculum for Reconciliation⁴, which was envisaged as a critical pedagogy that allowed students to engage reflexively with their own background and that of the other main ethnic and cultural group (see also May, 1999). As Ira Shor (1992) remarked, a curriculum that avoided questioning schools and society was not, as is commonly supposed, politically neutral ... “social education that tried to be politically neutral supported the dominant ideology in society and cut off student’s development as critical thinkers about the world” (Shor, 1992, p12).

The human resource & people system

This refers to the people processes required to implement performance. The need, for example, as highlighted by our study, for teacher professional development and school-home-community partnerships. Some interesting and stark differences of perspective were revealed when teachers’ and parents’ views were compared. By silencing the voice of parents, the case study schools appeared to have deprived themselves of a powerful source of support for school improvement.

⁴ However, a dedicated programme for Local and Global Citizenship (at secondary level), and the inclusion of a citizenship strand within personal development work (primary level), is now planned for inclusion in a revised N.Irish curriculum.

Pervasive system variables

The pervasive system refers to building, district and community variables that impact performance, human resource and people systems, in both positive and negative ways. They are macro-level variables that affect morale, motivation and satisfaction within the system (Knoff, 1995). For example, the respondents in our study drew attention to the significance of teacher and student subcultures for effectiveness and improvement. As Fullan (1988) remarked, attempts to improve schools which did not take account of cultures and underlying organisational conditions might be doomed to failure or tinkering. Furthermore, respondents reported better student and teacher outcomes when schools operated in a communally and collaborative fashion; that is, when they adopted a personal-communal model of schooling (see also Rosenholtz 1991; Kruse, Louis and Bryk, 1995 & Watkins 1999b).

The School Audit (SCA)

This represented the next stage in our development of Knoff's institutional framework and the I-MAP. The audit covers all aspects of school life from the hidden and difficult-to-grasp curriculum of fundamental value systems, taken-for-granted knowledges, rituals and routines that form the fabric of daily life in schools, to curricular modifications and school policies; what Corbett referred to as the school's "Culture of Inclusivity" (Corbett, 1992, p129). *The audit provides a guide to help practitioners undertake a collaborative and critically reflective exploration of the community relations dimension with a view to identifying areas for improvement.*

The materials guide staff along a structure allowing for a progressively more detailed examination of the school (see also Booth and Ainscow, 2000). As can be seen, the structure begins with Knoff's key systems or dimensions of school life. The indicators represent aspects or features of school life identified by key sets of players as mediating central government policy for community relations education. Finally, the questions focus on key aspects or features of school life and are intended to provoke critical reflection and collaborative analysis. In many cases they allude to aspirations towards which existing school arrangements might be compared. In questionnaire format, the questions are used in conjunction with rating scales requiring respondents to indicate their agreement with the statements as they reflect strengths/weaknesses (or developed /underdeveloped features) within school arrangements.

The original resources were produced over one school term by a team of Western Education & Library Board (WELB) teachers engaged with school-based community relations. These were middle or senior managers holding responsibility for the coordination of EMU and attending a series of teacher education courses organised by the second author along the theme of "Developing EMU and Citizenship in the Primary and Secondary School". The teachers piloted the work in their own schools and returned at the next session to share experiences and discuss possible modifications. These sessions stimulated creative thinking and the development of other resources to accompany the materials. For example, working in cross-

community teams, one group of teachers produced a draft set of principles for community relations education entitled “propositions for change” (see below).

The SCA is designed to encourage key stakeholders (teachers, students and parents) to collaborate, share and build on their existing knowledge about what impedes effective community relations education and assist them in a detailed examination of the possibilities for improvement. It is not seen as an additional initiative for schools, but as a systematic way of engagement in development planning, setting priorities for change, implementing developments and reviewing progress. However, there are a number of ways that whole-school teams, curriculum teams or individual teachers could use the SCA in practice (see for example Booth and Ainscow, 2000; Lynagh & Potter, 2005; MacBeath, 1999; MacBeath et al, 1996; MacGilchrist, 2000). Booth and Ainscow describe an audit process that involved five phases:

- **Phase 1. Getting started with the index (half a term):**
the school development planning team establishes a co-ordinating group representative of the whole-school community. The group informs themselves and the rest of the staff about the index concepts, materials and methods for gathering together knowledge about the school from all members of the school's community.
- **Phase 2. Data-gathering; finding out about the school (one term):**
detailed exploration of the school and the identification of priorities for development.
- **Phase 3. Data-analysis; producing an inclusive school development plan:**
change the school development plan to make it reflect inclusive aims and the particular priorities identified in phase 2.
- **Phase 4. Implementing priorities (ongoing):**
implementation and support.
- **Phase 5. Reviewing the *index* process (ongoing):**
review of the school's progress in developing inclusive cultures, policies and practices.

(Booth & Ainscow, 2000 p, 19)

The SCA has now been piloted in a major ELB school improvement project. Experience suggests that the audit needs to be adapted to the particular context of the individual school. For example, rather than attempt to evaluate schools across all four SCA dimensions, most pilot schools decided to focus on just one dimension of school life, or use a limited number of indicators. The starting point for many was the “Performance” dimension and indicators relevant to the evaluation of cross-community contact; focusing specifically on key questions such as: “Do contact programmes promote progression and continuity?”; “Is progression from interpersonal to intergroup issues visible within contact programmes?” or “Are both schools clear about the rationale and purposes of any joint programmes?”.

Underpinning our work is the assumption that school self-evaluation is a key requirement for school improvement and that evaluation criteria should reflect the priorities of key stakeholders. A major strength of this kind of evaluation is that the processes are owned by schools themselves and, as described above, can dovetail with

school development planning processes leading to improvement. MacBeath et al (1996) suggested that schools genuinely wanted to have ownership of the criteria by which they were judged, as well as have some investment in the data-gathering process. On the other hand, we discovered that schools did not want to reinvent the wheel, and, consequently, they found our ideas and tools extremely helpful.

School self- evaluation has to do with ensuring that the sum of the parts is exceeded by the collective whole (Brighouse and Woods, 1999). That is, it is an approach to organisational improvement that places learning at the heart of matters. It is an approach that eschews instrumental, controlling and bureaucratic change management strategies having narrow foci on performance and efficiency (see also Clarke et al, 1998). [As Brighouse and Woods \(1999\) suggested, it really provides schools with an opportunity to increase the common wealth of its curiosity; an extension of knowledge through the sharing of other people's ideas.](#) However, turning information into knowledge necessarily engages the organisation's current state of knowledge and the quality of its learning processes as an organisation. The development of information systems needs to be paralleled by the development of learning systems that can utilise data (Watkins, 1997). Consequently, like Watkins, MacBeath (1998) and other school improvers, we found that ... "Schools need friends!"

MacBeath et al (1996) stated that a major limitation with school self-evaluation was that it had its strongest appeal in healthy dynamic schools with a keen interest in improvement. Its attractions were likely to be least in schools that lacked self-confidence and denied rather than exposed weaknesses. This had implications for the levels of support required by schools from outside consultants or "critical friends". Brighouse and Woods (1999) described the critical friend as a trusted person. They cited Fullan (1988) who counterpointed the critical friend with the "uncritical lover" and the "hostile witness" or "unloving critic", both of whom were dangerous to the health of a school.

When it comes to applying the approach to community relations work in violently divided communities, such as N. Ireland, the specific socio-political contexts within which some schools function present additional barriers. Concerned about how to overcome the organisational "**Culture of silence**" and generate initial discussion amongst colleagues over SCA indicators related to community relations beliefs and values, some members of the original implementation team piloted the idea of using children's poetic narratives as catalysts for discussion. Typically, acting as co-participants, teachers experimented with asking colleagues to take part in interpretative communities of "narrative analysts" (see Smith 2003). What this meant in practice was that peace poems were elicited from children and young people (collected by teachers within their own institutions) and a sample of these were then discussed interpretatively by small groups of teachers supported by practices from the organisational development approach called "Appreciative inquiry" or AI (Cooperrider, Sorensen & Whitney, 2000).

AI is a radically different approach to organisational development and the management of change. In distinction to conventional change procedures, AI lays less emphasis on problem -solving and more on fostering innovation in social -organisational arrangements. The emphasis on appreciation springs from the concept of the "Appreciative eye" in art, where, it is said, within every piece of art one might

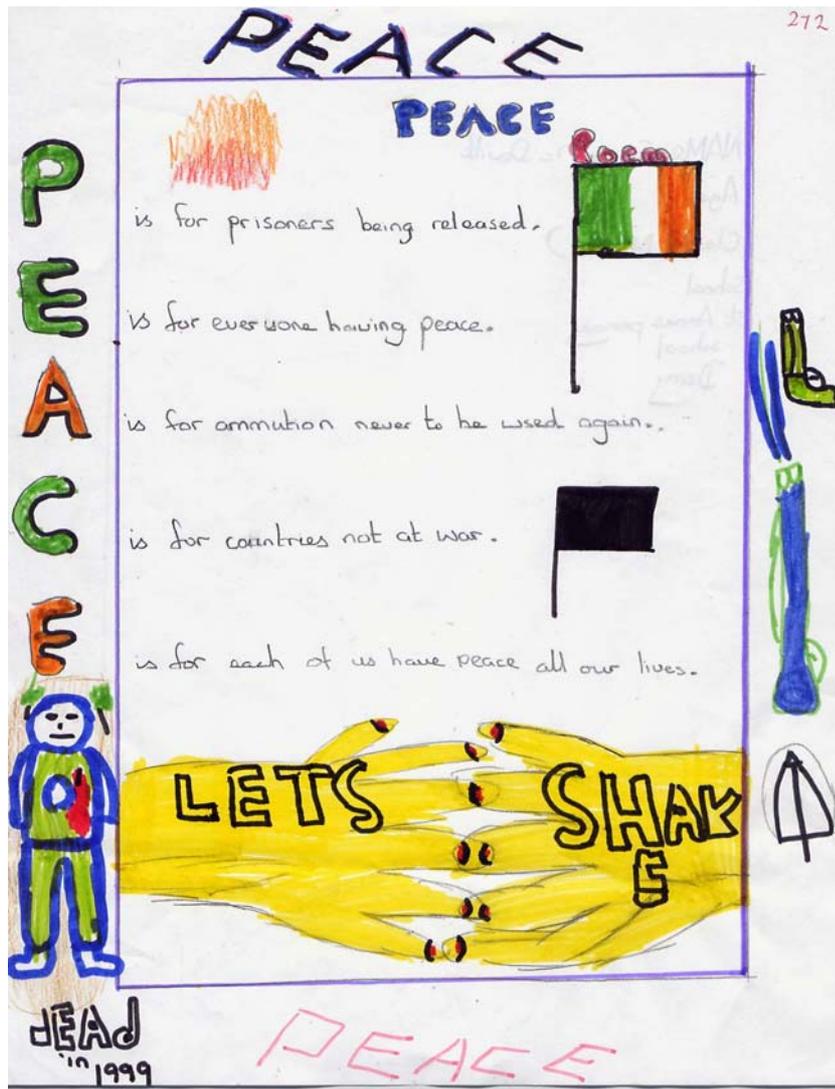
locate beauty (Gergen, 1999). In the AI approach, the framework for collective action includes asking a series of questions beginning with one designed to foster an appreciation of the best of what there is within an organisation (on a particular theme or issue) and a vision based on what the institution might look like. The process continues with participants collaborating and dialoguing over, “What should be” and finally “What can be”. Vocabularies of hope serve to act as catalysts or resources for this set of questions, such as stories and metaphors, or, as in this case, peace poems.

Pilot work confirmed that narrative inquiry incorporating appreciative inquiry methodology (story-based approach) provided a very powerful stimulus for discussion and the analysis of children’s social worlds. It proved to be a very empowering and sensitive way to develop a “Language of possibility for action”(Mayo, 2003) and challenge that most obdurate of barriers to the transformation of schooling for community relations-the culture of silence that discourages open discussion on the causes and consequences of social division. The following quote illustrates the imaginative potential of the process:

“ Maybe as teachers we should be more responsive for tackling some issues, either the cultural or home issues about Derry, Omagh, Enniskillen etc and educating them as to what is going on within our own situation, who these people are we hear talked about on television, who Martin McGuinness is, who Trimble is. Or the Secretary of State...you know things like that are bandied about and they don’t have a notion, certainly the year 7’s I have don’t have a notion ... I don’t think we try, I’m sorry, I just don’t think we try hard enough (yes, from others)... I think we avoid it and run away from it. I’m not surprised we run away from it...because parents will come down around your neck; but you know...I’m past caring about that anymore”

(Smith & Neill, 2005, p 23)

Try the following “Do-Review -Learn- Apply” activity that exemplifies the narrative analysis procedure:



Do-Review-Learn-Apply 1

DO: consider the peace poems you have been given (see, for example Gerard's text, a year 6 student, average age 10)

REVIEW: what strikes you most about these stories?

LEARN: what can we learn from these stories?

APPLY: what practice could develop from your learning?; if there isn't any- then why?

Table 2. The SCA Performance System

dimension	indicator	key questions	
		strengths	areas for improvement
Performance	school policy	does the school have an agreed policy on controversial issues in N. Ireland;	
		is this policy communicated to stakeholders?	
	mission	does the Principal and management team identify priorities for community relations education through a rigorous self-evaluation process?	
		does the school mission statement, aims and objectives allow parents and others obtain a view on the school's philosophy with regard to improving relationships between the two main communities in N. Ireland?	
	development planning	is the school's position on community relations reflected in the school development plan?	
		does the plan for community relations indicate clear targets, success criteria and tasks to be achieved?	
		does the development plan identify relevant staff development?	
		does the school have action plans (which relate to good relations and diversity) that indicate clear targets to be achieved, success criteria, tasks, relevant staff development?	
	board of governors	has the board of governors appointed someone with responsibility for the community relations dimension?	
		do curriculum teams support whole-school development plans?	
curriculum	are monitoring procedures in place?		
	has the school identified curricular provision for promoting good relations in N. Ireland?		
	does community relations education cross disciplinary boundaries?		
		does classroom -based work emerge from natural	

	<p>organisers such as literature, human history and contemporary issues?</p> <p>does the curriculum use the real lives, streets, histories, families, languages, cultures and preoccupations of the students as resources for learning?</p> <p>do learning experiences promote progression and continuity ?</p> <p>are the learning experiences for community relations education planned and taught in an appropriate sequence to meet the needs of children and young people of different ages, abilities and aspirations?</p> <p>do children and young people understand the aims and purposes of community relations education?</p> <p>does community relations education help children and young people construct identities as engaged and participative citizens?</p> <p>does community relations education enable students put forward their views intelligently, and candidly, in order to persuade, rather than manipulate or coerce?</p> <p>does community relations education encourage those voices and perspectives that have traditionally been marginalised or excluded in schools?</p> <p>has the aims, content and organisation of the curriculum experiences for community relations been devised in cooperation with parents/carers ?</p> <p>has the school informed parents and students about the materials and teaching methods being used for community relations education ?</p> <p>does community relations education allow students to engage in the discussion of controversial issues related to living in N. Ireland?</p> <p>are participatory learning methods used?</p> <p>do students get the opportunity to co-construct meaning in their community relations education?</p> <p>do the methods used allow students to engage critically and reflexively with their own background scripts/ stories and that of other ethnic groups?</p> <p>has as much time been devoted to the study of peacemaking and peacekeeping in the N. Ireland curriculum as that of conflict and war in the past?</p>
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		<p>do curriculum experiences raise students' awareness about the nature of institutional sectarianism/racism?</p> <p>do curriculum experiences allow students' to explore how institutional sectarianism /racism might be undermined ?</p> <p>has the school identified the specific contribution of cross-community programmes?</p> <p>is progression from interpersonal to inter- group issues visible in cross-community programmes ?</p> <p>are students' views on their cross-community experiences collected, analysed and then used for future planning?</p>
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Table 3. The SCA Human Resources & People System

dimension	indicator	key questions	
		strengths	areas for improvement
Human Resources & People	professional development of people	<p>does management provide opportunities for the professional development of teachers in the community relations dimension of schooling ?</p> <p>are opportunities provided for teachers to explore their own attitudes, beliefs and personal biographies in relation to intergroup issues in N Ireland ?</p> <p>is professional development for the community relations dimension made part of an integrated approach, rather than seen as an isolated activity?</p>	
	collaborative working	<p>do school teams work collaboratively in relation to thinking and planning about this area?</p> <p>does the school promote and provide professional development that recognises the diversity of staff , and, fully acknowledges the benefits to the school?</p>	
	leadership	<p>does the school management lead by example by</p>	

		<p>demonstrating good practice in challenging sectarianism & racism in the workplace?</p> <p>do teachers receive effective support from SMT?</p> <p>does the SMT ensure that all staff are involved in policy development, planning and policy evaluation?</p> <p>does the leadership ensure that there are effective links between staff development, performance review staff development (PRSD) and school development planning processes?</p> <p>how is work for the community relations dimension reflected in the job descriptions (roles & responsibilities) of a range of staff including the management?</p> <p>is there a middle -management/ head of teams responsibility for this area?</p>
	<p>roles and responsibilities</p> <p>networks</p>	<p>is the school aware of the range of services & support provided by the community for work in the area of community relations education?</p> <p>in order to enhance provision, does the school make use of creative partnerships e.g. with other schools, creative time-tabling, longer school days, increased teacher mobility, shared sixth forms, summer schools ?</p> <p>does the school involve the PSNI in their community relations curriculum?; does it inform parents about such involvement?</p>

Table 4. The SCA Pervasive System

dimension	indicator	key questions	
		strengths	areas for improvement
Pervasive	the deep culture		

	<p>beliefs about community relations</p> <p>social values diversity /assimilation</p> <p>equality & fairness</p> <p>culture of silence</p> <p>human rights culture</p> <p>social climate</p> <p>r'ships</p> <p>collaboration</p>	<p>do teachers believe, “ if children learn to respect their own local community, they will learn to respect the other group’s community”?</p> <p>do teachers believe that, “if parents and pupils feel good about themselves, they can then go out and face other people (their co-religionists) without fear, no longer feeling themselves to be second class citizens”?</p> <p>do teachers believe that the main curriculum task for community relation is self-esteem enhancement and/or interpersonal skills development?</p> <p>does the school leadership believe that children should learn how, “we are all the same-all God’s children”; rather than talk too much about differences ?</p> <p>do pupils in this school believe that learning about cultural diversity is important?</p> <p>do pupils have faith in the policy of equal - opportunities?</p> <p>is ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic diversity seen as adding value to school life and learning?</p> <p>are equality issues discussed openly among and between staff, parents and students?</p> <p>are issues of sectarianism/racism discussed openly among and between staff, parents and students?</p> <p>do staff believe they have a part to play in promoting an equal- opportunities culture?</p> <p>to what extent is the school’s values based on human rights principles?</p> <p>do older students help younger ones?</p> <p>are the views of all listened to within the school?</p> <p>do non-teaching staff feel involved in the school?</p>
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Table 5. School Audit: Alternative version

Dimension of school life	Indicators	Key Questions	Evidence	
			Strengths	Areas for Improvement
School Culture	<p>Values</p> <p>Proactive</p> <p>Risk- taking</p> <p>Good communication</p>	<p>Does pupils' behaviour and social relationships show concern for and understanding of others?</p> <p>Have pupils high expectations of themselves and others?</p> <p>Does the school promote equality of opportunity and a sense of fairness in all the work of the school?</p> <p>Are equality issues discussed openly and constructively among and between staff and pupils?</p> <p>Is ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic diversity recognised valued and promoted as a positive feature of the school and its community?</p> <p>Are positive measures in place to ensure that pupils' parents and staff are treated equally, with respect and in a fair and just manner?</p> <p>Is there a policy of inclusivity which deals with culture, language, disability, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation?</p> <p>Is there a whole school curriculum dimension to the community relations dimension within the school?</p> <p>Are teachers and pupils confident in recognising and dealing with discrimination?</p> <p>Is the Board of Govenors knowledgeable and involved in the community relations work of the school?</p>		

		<p>Does the school make a noticeable contribution to the life of the community?</p> <p>Does the school provide opportunities for members of the community to engage in educational experiences and contribute to decision-making within the school?</p>		
Pupils' Learning Experiences	<p>Curriculum opportunities-controversial issues in the community, conflict issues</p> <p>Appropriate to needs of pupils</p> <p>Unique features</p>	<p>Does the school have an up to date community relations policy which reflects current thinking and research findings in this area?</p> <p>Is the policy in keeping with the school's aims?</p> <p>Do the learning experiences for community relations for each year group promote progression and continuity?</p> <p>Are the learning experiences planned and taught in an appropriate sequence to meet the range of needs, abilities and aspirations of the pupils?</p> <p>Are there effective and meaningful links between the community relations curriculum and other curriculum areas?</p>		
Teacher Issues	<p>Teacher prejudice</p> <p>Teacher avoidance</p> <p>Teacher knowledge and understanding of community relations education</p>	<p>Have opportunities been provided for teachers to engage in professional development that enables them to provide quality community relations education for pupils?</p> <p>How is support provided for those teachers involved in education for community relations?</p> <p>What opportunities are there for teachers to explore their own attitudes beliefs and personal biographies about community relations?</p> <p>Are teachers encouraged to critically reflect on the community relations work of the school?</p>		
Leadership	<p>Principal has a clear vision and purpose for</p>	<p>Does the Principal take into account the views and needs of all those with a stake in the life of the school and who are</p>		

	<p>community relations work</p> <p>Management engages in self-evaluation in respect of community relations and plans for improvement</p> <p>Management create opportunities for INSET in community relations</p> <p>Management take responsibility for the effectiveness of the school's work in community relations and ensures that resources are used appropriately</p>	<p>involved directly or indirectly in developing and or delivering community relations within the school?</p> <p>Does the Principal evaluate objectively the qualities of the staff and their contributions to community relations?</p> <p>Does the Principal and senior management team identify and focus on clear priorities determined through effective self-evaluation of the community relations dimension?</p> <p>Does the Principal and SMT put pupils' progress at the centre of management and activities for community relations?</p> <p>Does the Principal and SMT seek out and develop productive partnerships in the immediate and wider community?</p> <p>Does the Principal and SMT ensure that all staff are involved in Community Relations policy development, planning and evaluation?</p> <p>Is there reference made to the development of community relations education in the school development plan?</p> <p>Do relevant action plans indicate clear targets to be achieved, success criteria, tasks, staff development and timescales?</p> <p>Are staff fully engaged at each stage of the planning process and are fully committed to the plan?</p> <p>Are parents and pupils are consulted about the action plan?</p>		
<p>Community Context</p>	<p>Knowledge and understanding of the school's community context</p> <p>Address relevant community relations issues ie</p>	<p>How does the community relations work of the school reflect an understanding and recognition of the local community context?</p> <p>In what ways do the pupils have an opportunity to explore their own identity and the identity of their community?</p>		

	<p>sectarianism, graffiti</p> <p>The extent to which the school is a resource for the community and draws on the community as a context</p>	<p>In what ways is the community engaged with the school in the development of its community relations work?</p>		
Partnership with other schools	<p>Shared understanding of community relations</p> <p>Shared vision for community relations</p> <p>Collaborative work on planning for contact experiences</p> <p>Monitoring and reviewing partnership</p>	<p>Is there a shared understanding about what is meant by community relations in schools?</p> <p>Are both schools clear about the rationale and purposes of any joint programme?</p> <p>Is there a joint policy for community relations work between schools which is shared and understood by the whole school?</p> <p>Are both schools involved in ongoing cycle of planning and evaluation of the joint community relations work?</p>		
Partnership with other agencies and individuals	<p>Shared understanding of community relations</p> <p>Shared vision for community relations</p> <p>Collaborative work on planning for contact experiences</p> <p>Monitoring and reviewing partnership</p>	<p>How does the school identify agencies/organisations/individuals to facilitate the community relations work at an appropriate level?</p> <p>How have they been involved in the planning and evaluation cycle?</p> <p>How does the school evaluate the quality of the community relations learning experiences provided?</p>		
Partnership with parents	<p>Effective links with parents</p>	<p>Are parents/carers informed about the school's community relations policy?</p>		

	<p>Fully informed and involved View of parents taken on board</p>	<p>Are parents supportive of the school's community relations policy?</p> <p>Does the school use a wide variety of effective methods for communicating with parents about community relations work ?</p> <p>Do parents engage in effective two-way communication with the school regarding community relations work?</p> <p>Are the parents given clear detailed and well presented information about all aspects of community relations education in the school?</p> <p>Are parents consulted about the aims, organisation, content and future development of community relations work in the school?</p>		
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The Dual-Axis Organisational Analysis: Da-ORG

The “contact hypothesis” remains one of the most durable ideas in the literature on racial and ethnic relations (Ellison and Powers, 1994, cited by Connolly, 2000). This is the commonly held belief that inter-group contact, the mere fact of interacting, reduces prejudice (Allport, 1954). The belief that contact and community relations are synonymous is held by so many teachers that it appears to be an implicit theory underpinning practice. As mentioned above, this view only tends to limit teachers’ curriculum and other perspectives on the task to be achieved. Although not a statutory element within the N. Irish curriculum, over one million pounds (excluding substitute teacher cover) was allocated during the 2001/2002 year to support contact programmes across the five N. Irish local education authorities (O’Connor et al, 2002).

One issue of great practical concern to teachers is whether religious backgrounds and group-related differences should be made salient during contact, or whether Catholics and Protestants should meet under circumstances in which features of their personalities and interpersonal characteristics are more visible. In N. Ireland, football shirts act as an extremely important symbolic marker of Protestant and Catholic

working class identities. In our research we discovered that teachers usually banned children from wearing such markers of inclusion and exclusion. However, as the following comments illustrate, this often served to encourage male students in particular to go out of their way to stage symbolic rituals in opposition to the dominant teacher discourse on avoidance of controversial issues. Very often, the end result of this was conflict between staff and students as well as antagonism between groups of students. Indeed, the high percentages of students who associated their school-based cross-community activities with conflict and anxiety was disturbing:

CONNOR (PROTESTANT) STUDENT: *We got on the bus and we knew not to wear any Rangers stuff or nothing because we didn't want to start any fights. But as soon as me and Ryan were sitting in the back of the bus, these two wee boys came up and they were wearing Celtic hats and all and started calling us names. They came up to the back of the bus and started pushing us so I told the teacher. Their teacher scolded them. When we arrived at the Folk Park [heritage industry] they started on us again in the toilets and started calling us a whole lot of names.*

SCHOOL EMU COORDINATOR: *Approximately four years ago we took this mixed group to the Tower museum in Derry [heritage industry]. You know how outside the Tower museum there are a few street sellers selling stuff and as soon as we arrived this wee boy from Inch [Catholic school] went straight up to one of the stalls and bought a Celtic hat! Well, I swear to Goodness, if there wasn't everyone of ours heading off in all directions looking for Rangers gear... just because he ... a lot of it is like this.*

The Da-ORG offers practitioners a simple visual aid for appraising cross-community contact and facilitating communication over contact programmes (see figure 3 below). It combines a typology of work environments involving the dimensions of challenge and support with thinking from Social Identity and Self-Categorisation Theory. Theoretical and other empirical work using SIT has suggested that making group membership and social identities salient may be critical to generalising positive contact experience to the outgroup in general (Hewstone, 1996). However, in the N. Ireland context, this involves high challenge for all those involved. On the other hand, making personal identities more salient through emphasising personalised and supportive contexts may generalise over a wide range of situations, but not from individuals to groups (Rose, 1981). More recently, Hewstone (1996) suggested that the distinction between personal and social identity should be considered as two orthogonal dimensions.

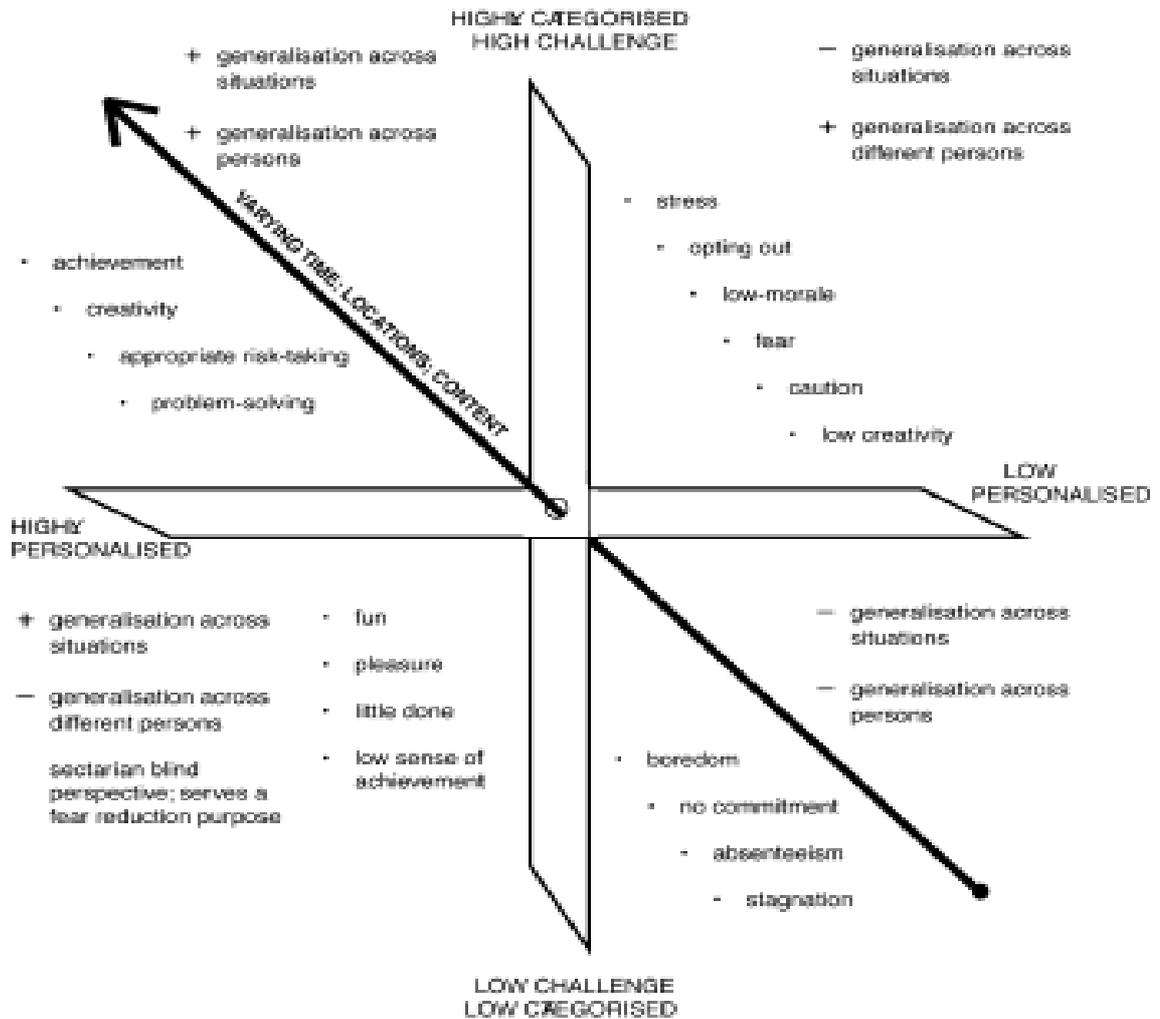


FIGURE 3: APPRAISING CROSS-COMMUNITY CONTACT

As can be seen from figure 3, positive outcomes are least likely in the top right (north east) and bottom right (south east) quadrants respectively. With regard to the latter, offering neither challenge nor support, this form of contact may lead to boredom, absenteeism and lack of commitment among participants. Furthermore, “stereotyping confirming” information may generalise to the outgroup in general. The bottom left or (south west) quadrant represents “sectarian blind” contact similar to most of the programmes we observed. Attention here is paid to the personal-social dimensions of contact, but little or no planned emphasis is given to issues of group identity. This type of programme may not lead to “stereotyping disconfirming” information transferring to the outgroup in general. It may, on the other hand, serve a fear reduction purpose, an important quality during early contact encounters. Programmes, though, need to move on past this stage as illustrated by the arrow dissecting our model (*see also, the Developmental Framework: devised by Western Education & Library Board teachers during participation in professional development courses on improving school effectiveness for community relations*). The best prospect for positive generalisation to the outgroup may be when contact facilitates getting to know a small group of outgroup members very well. At the same time, group membership needs to be evident, even discussed rather than ignored (Hewstone,

1996). As Glazier (2003) suggested, contact tends to focus on the destruction of something (prejudice) rather than the construction of something- cultural fluency. Developing cultural fluency involves the ability to step back and forth between two cultures, to embrace one’s own culture while understanding its relationship to others; to increase perspective taking (Glazier, 2003).

Table 6. A Developmental Framework for Cross-Community Contact-a working document

Foundation	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
Experiences designed to develop collaborative relationships between children e.g. small group work, circle time and other activities focused on skill development	<p>Explore cultural identity</p> <p>Explore issues of diversity & interdependence</p>	<p>Begin to explore the controversial nature of the expression of cultural identity through flags, emblems, symbols and graffiti</p> <p>Challenge stereotypes & prejudice</p> <p>Develop strategies to address issues of sectarianism and racism</p>	<p>Address controversial community relations issues. Develop further work on sectarianism including the nature and consequences for communities eg., discrimination, violence & genocide. Identify strategies for addressing the negative impact of sectarianism at individual, community & Government levels</p>

THE CR PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE PROFILES

Reflective learning on three recent projects undertaken by UNESCO staff allowed them to construct a professional profile setting out what one might expect to see and hear in classrooms that foster effective community relations education.

The CR-profiles offer practitioners a research-based and practical tool to help them, in tandem with others, become more reflexively self-aware with regard to their own lived practice and supportive of their professional learning. It also attempts, albeit very tentatively and imprecisely, to take account of three decades of research in different countries that demonstrates how learners who focus on “performance” bring some counter-productive strategies to learning while those who have a “learning orientation” are more flexible, more aware of their own learning and more successful (see, Dweck et al, 2000). This research suggests that a focus on performance can depress learning whereas a focus on learning can enhance performance (see figure below). We found it remarkable that, in the past, the motivational effects of the criteria used for assessing professional competence had been neglected by policymakers. As Watkins (2000) suggested, the difference between the teacher as performing functionary and professional who makes a difference may depend on how we think of teachers’ competencies and how much of the hierarchy in the figure below we consider.

Initial teacher educators should find the CR-profile particularly helpful. Some very individualised and unhelpful discourses on human psychological development still circulate, reflected in the ITE competencies model. An implicit “ideology of the individual” is reflected in teacher educator’s initial responses to such developments as the N. Ireland General Teaching Council’s proposed set of professional values, and, in deliberations over the feasibility of selecting people for higher education courses on the basis of presumed fixed personality characteristics. With regard to the former, teacher educators are seen to come unstuck when thinking about how to assess behaviours such as, trust, respect, integrity and intolerance. These responses make no psychological sense at all, failing, as they do, to recognise the socially embedded nature of human behaviour.

On the other hand, the CR-profiles reflect the contextual nature of human social development and direct teachers in training and their tutors to where the action is; that is, towards children’s learning and the kinds of learning contexts or activity systems teachers set up within the classroom.

Fig. 4. Learning and Performance Competencies (after Watkins, 2000)

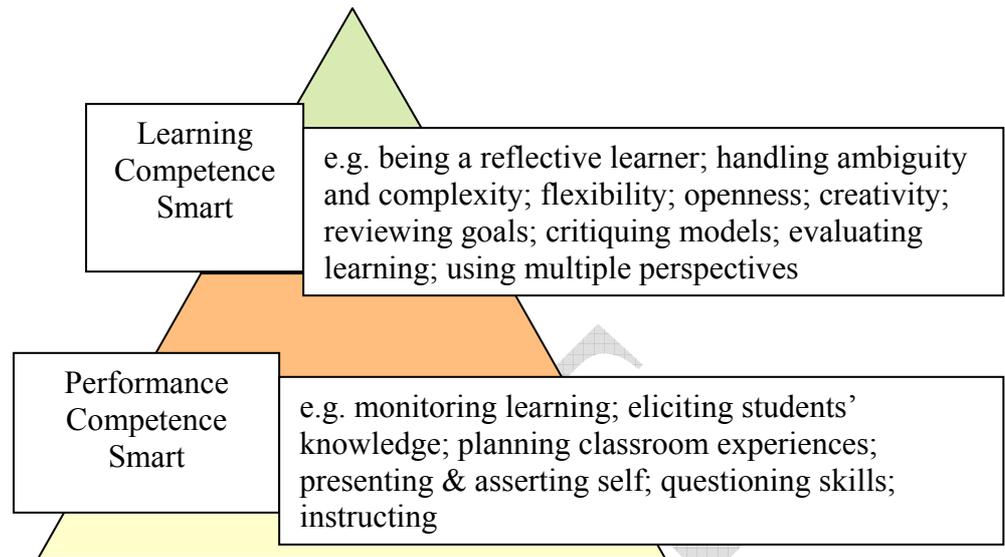


Table 7. Learning Competencies Smart:

an effective teacher for community relations in the formal sector will promote classroom activity systems that e.g.

are sensitive to the differing experiences of children and deal with expressions of diversity	
promote rich goals for learning & rich concepts of learning ie, learning equals “meaning-making or creating knowledge” as part of doing things with others as opposed to learning equals “being taught” or “getting it in the head”	
promote a personal -communal set of classroom norms rather than rational-bureaucratic	
promote respect for human rights	
actively promotes children’s reflective engagement with their own backgrounds and that of the other main ethnic and cultural group	
promotes learning that helps students understand exploitative conditions	

within public organisations and society more widely	
provides students with opportunities to change the social injustices they meet by taking social action	
encourages a spirit of inquiry where: students inquire into their own learning; inquiries into learning are made public; students' writing on their experiences and insights into their own learning are displayed	
reflects a view of students as socially competent and their lives as socially embedded	
promotes collaboration, dialogue and classroom experiences where learners are more engaged with each other, where more peer helping and reciprocal teaching occurs from which students emerge with expanded potentiality for effective relationships	
overcomes barriers to inclusion based on gender, race, social class, disability and religious differences	
reflects a view of personality and identity development as malleable and responsive to change; as opposed to fixed	
demonstrates more of a shared balance of power between adults and students	
encourages students to plan and reflect before proceeding with tasks/projects and to make choices about strategies	
embeds classroom work in the life experiences of students	
offers students the opportunity to acknowledge others' viewpoints and to defend or modify their own in the light of new evidence	
encourages teachers to be explicit in describing their positions on sensitive subjects	
focuses on social identity issues (e.g. intergroup behaviour in N. Ireland) as well as on personal-interpersonal development(e.g. self-development)	

Table 8. Performance

Competencies Smart: an effective educator for community relations in the formal sector will promote classroom activity systems that e.g.

reflects a view of the teachers' role where collaborative working arrangements with other colleagues is seen as essential e.g: team teaching; collaborative action-research; observing colleagues	
give equivalent time to the study of peacekeeping and peacebuilding to that of conflict and war in the past	
works collaboratively with parents to plan, develop and implement community relations/citizenship programmes	
develops cross-community contact programmes where, at some stage, group membership is made salient and a topic for discussion rather than ignored	
develops learning experiences which demonstrate progression & continuity	
promotes self-assessment procedures including learning logs	
gives the teacher more of a "guide on the side" than "sage on the stage" role	
develops authentic forms of assessment that focus on the ability of students to discover & use knowledge (and takes cognisance of children's multiple intelligences)	
makes storytelling a significant part of curriculum development	
makes visible the contribution of cross-community contact to the achievement of programme goals	
deals with disempowering classroom language & behaviour in a sensitive and appropriate way e.g. sexist, racist & sectarian remarks	

The Revised Teacher Competencies Framework, Code of Values & Professional Practice: Implications for the Community Relations Dimension of Teacher Education?

The first “Code of Values and Professional Practice” for Northern Ireland teachers was launched by the General Teaching Council (GTCNI) during October, 2004. The Code makes explicit, for the first time, the teaching profession’s core values and commitments. The GTCNI has also produced a final report on their review of the Teacher Competencies and Continuing Professional Development Model in Northern Ireland. The proposals include:

- The reduction of the current competence statements from 92 to 27;
- The assimilation of the Council’s Code of Values and Professional Practice into the proposed new competences;
- The proposal that consideration be given to a guaranteed induction placement for beginning teachers;
- In respect of CPD, a new professional development framework with clear professional milestones; The introduction of an individualised programme of CPD;
- The development of a virtual college.

Research

Research Question:

Preliminary research at the UNESCO Centre, School of Education, has been conducted into the extent to which the revised competences meet the requirements for teaching effectively in a divided society.

Methods:

The above question was explored through the use of structured -exercises, in particular, the “card-sort” (Osborn, 1963). The proposed new competence statements were reproduced on each of 27 cards. Respondents were then provided with a pack of statements and asked to agree on ... “ the five thought to be most important and the three regarded as the least important for teaching effectively in a divided-society; in other words, the most and least important for community relations education in N. Ireland”.

Data -Collection:

The card-sort method was applied consistently with four main groups of respondents, i.e. trainee teachers, initial teacher educators, researchers and teachers at the early professional development stage. To date, approximately 100 respondents have taken part. Most of the sessions were tape- recorded for transcription at a later stage.

Results:

An analysis of cross-groups data revealed the following rank order of competence statements:

Table 9.The five most relevant competence statements

Understand and uphold the following core values: trust, respect, integrity, honesty, fairness, tolerance, commitment, equality, service	
A knowledge and understanding of the need to take account of the significant features of pupils’ cultures, languages and faiths and to address the implications for learning arising from these.	

A knowledge and understanding of the interrelationship between schools and the communities they serve and the potential for mutual development and well-being.	
Contribute to the development and life of the school, collaborating with teaching and support staff, parents and external agencies.	
A knowledge and understanding of contemporary debates about the nature and purposes of education and of the social and policy contexts in which the aims of education are defined and implemented.	
A knowledge and understanding of the factors that promote and hinder effective learning, and aware of the need to provide for the holistic development of the child.	

Table 10. The three least relevant statements

Assess the levels of pupils' attainment against relevant bench-marking data and analyse this information in order to set suitable challenging targets for their pupils.	
Focus on assessment for learning by monitoring pupils' progress, giving constructive feedback to help pupils reflect on and improve their learning.	
Manage their time and workload effectively and efficiently and maintain a work/life balance.	

Table 11. Issues of Disagreement

<i>Set appropriate learning objectives, taking account of what students' know, understand and can do, and the demands of the Northern Ireland Curriculum in terms of skills acquisitions and progression.</i>	
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DO-REVIEW-LEARN-APPLY 2

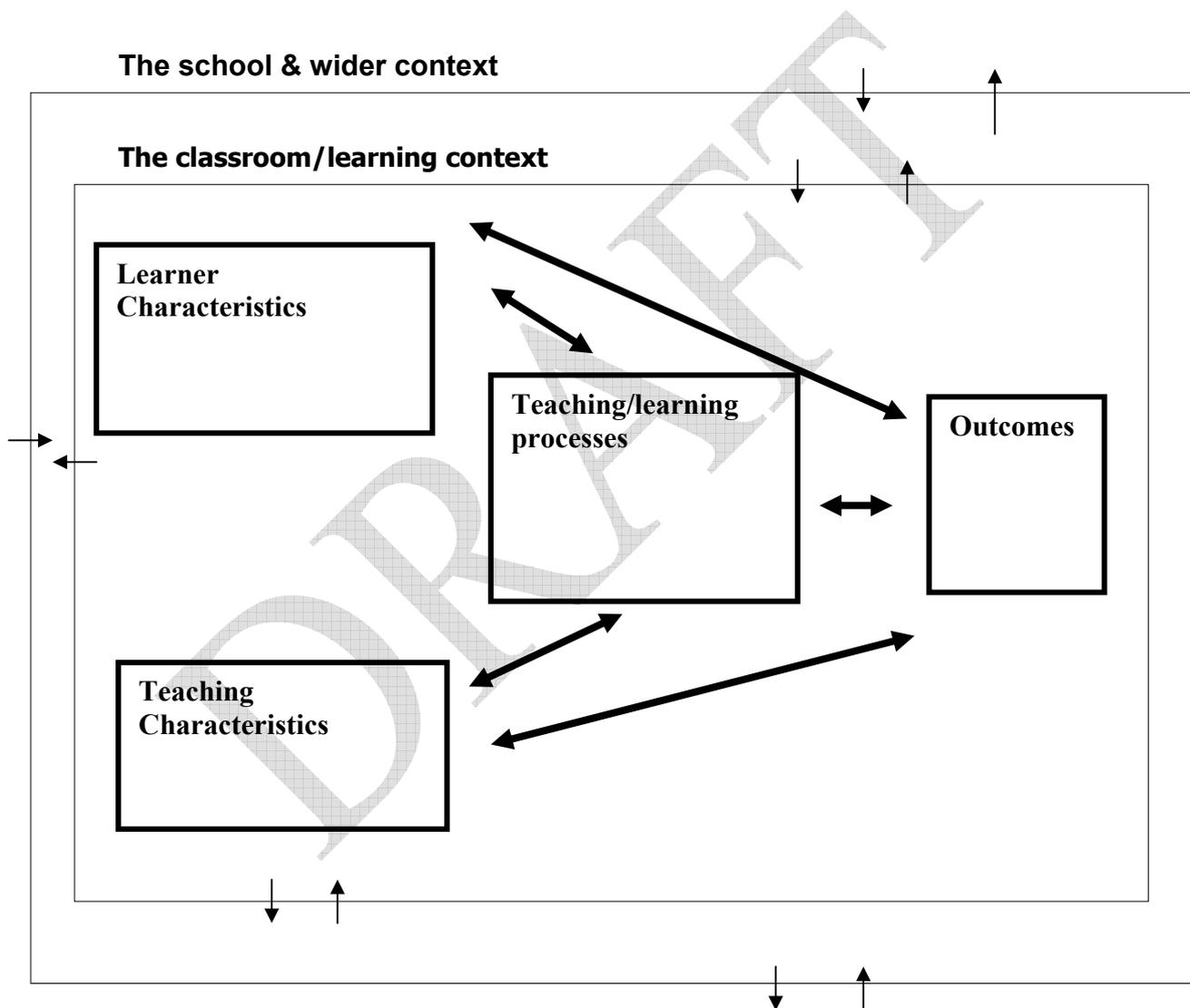


- (1) consider the above "most relevant" & "least relevant" competence statements for Community Relations Education you have been given
- (2) what can we learn from these statements?
- (3) What practices could develop from your learning?
- (4) In what ways do these practices differ from what was done in the past? Do they help you to focus on issues specifically related to community divisions in N. Ireland?

Fig 5. A Model for Community Relations Learning

from an idea by Watkins et al,1996 (after Biggs & Moore 1993)

Applied to effective learning in the community relations dimension by WELB practitioners attending professional development courses.



A model draws out key elements and makes a statement of their relation(Watkins et al 1996). This model addresses the elements involved in effective learning for community relations. As can be seen, this is not a linear mechanical model, the arrows denote influences both ways, recognising, for example, that outcomes affect characteristics of teaching, that particular outcomes for learning will accentuate particular learner characteristics, and that the qualities of classroom and school context affect the process of learning.

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PROPOSITIONS FOR SCHOOL-BASED CHANGE

Develop teaching-learning approaches that do not avoid controversial issues and allow students to engage critically and reflectively with their own background and that of the other main ethnic and cultural group

Introduce appropriate work such as the above at an early stage in the nursery/primary school.

Expose, name, identify and understand the conventions within the local community surrounding what can and cannot be said, talked about or done.

Have well organised and planned cross-community contact programmes where, at some stage, group membership is made salient and a topic of discussion rather than ignored.

Use active/collaborative learning methods.

Include the study of distant places and the local environment from an early age.

Give equivalent time to the study of peacekeeping and peace-building to that of conflict and war in the past (see also, Hicks and Holden, 1995).

Raise awareness amongst teachers of institutional sectarianism as well as other institutional practices that disempower.

Work collaboratively with parents to plan, develop and implement peace education policies and practices.

Allow students to have their voices heard in the design of the curriculum.

Make storytelling a significant part of curriculum development and the professional development of teachers for peacebuilding.

Develop within schools a personal-communal set of cultural norms rather than rational-bureaucratic (see, also Watkins, 1999 b).

Encourage school improvement approaches that focus as much on learning for change in self and society as much as on narrowly defined attainment targets and performance.

USEFUL ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

CRENI : The Community Relations Education Northern Ireland Web-Site

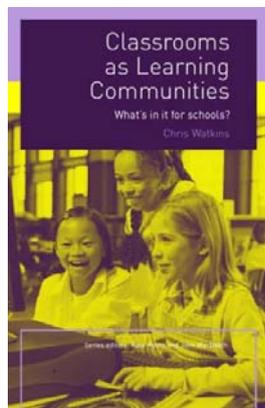


www.creni.org

“The Inter-board Schools Community Relations Support Panel has developed this website. It has been designed to provide teachers and schools with a wide range of up to date information and resources on the development of community relations practice in schools.”

Classrooms as Learning Communities: What's in It for Schools?

Chris Watkins (2005)



Synopsis

“In classrooms that operate as learning communities, the social and learning purposes advance together through all participants being involved and engaged in building knowledge. This book demonstrates a new way of seeing and managing classrooms through: - an integration of what's best in learning and what's best in the social life of classrooms - a vision of the role of the teacher that is more creative and more related to the commitments of teachers - a more connected view of schools in contrast to the mechanistic view that currently dominates - an answer to the short-term performance pressures of politicians - better performance. The practice and vision of classrooms that operate as learning communities is presented clearly, and aims to encourage teachers to take steps towards building a more effective classroom with the aspects of learning communities they choose”[

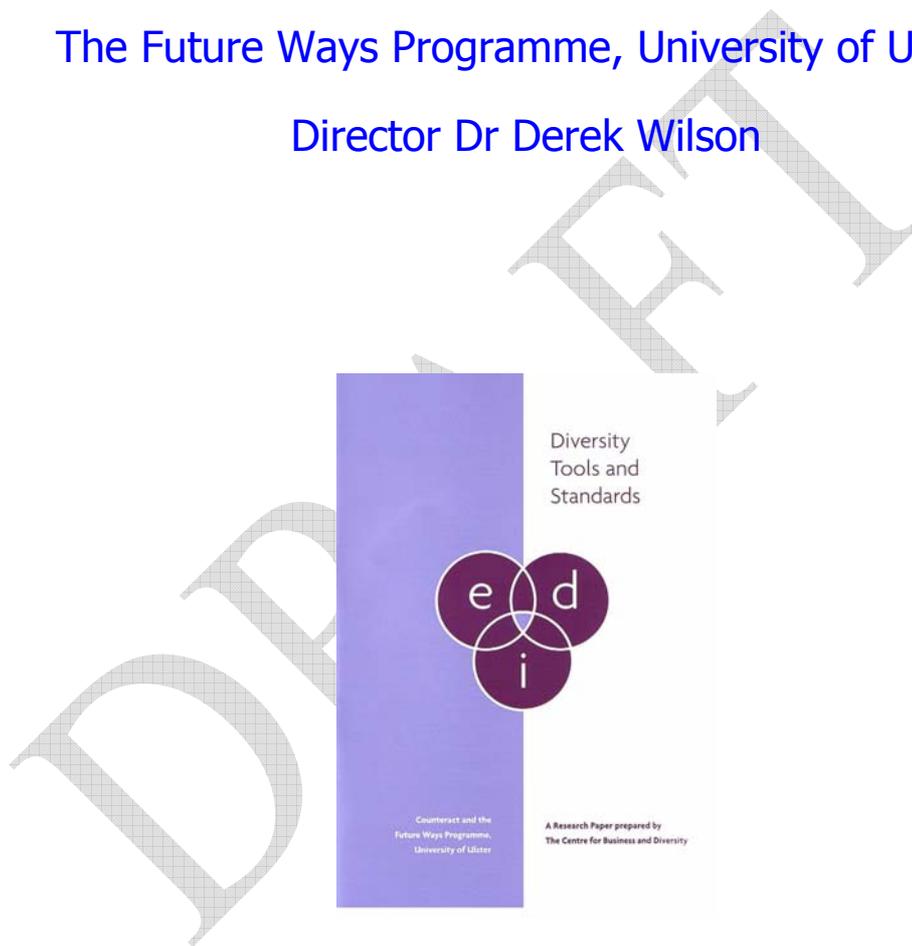
Available from:

Taylor & Francis Group Ltd
2 Park Square
Milton Park
Abingdon
Oxford OX14 4RN
UK

Diversity Tools and Standards

The Future Ways Programme, University of Ulster

Director Dr Derek Wilson



This paper reviews and analyses Quality Frameworks and Standards created to promote diversity & equity within organisations. It also includes a model of good practice.

The Gewirtz Social Justice Audit

“If democracy has any ethical content, it is about mechanisms, values and experiences which enable human relationships to develop. In this sense, democracy in N. Ireland, is not only about decision-making processes, but also about ways of dealing with each other, which affirm and confirm the value and dignity of all, not only in theory but in practice”

(Morrow, 1999, p1)

Gewirtz (2003) drew upon the seminal work of Marion Young (1990) to develop a broader, expanded conceptualisation of social justice that articulates more directly with the education system. Young argued that social justice should not be exclusively used in the narrow conventional sense of referring to the way in which goods were distributed in society (*distributional justice*). Rather, it should be expanded to include concern for the nature of the inter-connections between individuals and between individuals and society rather than the issue of to how much individuals got; in other words, it should be about *relational justice*. Gewirtz argued that isolating relational justice in this way forced us to think in greater depth about the nature of the relationships that structured society and structured what we did. The concept of social justice was developed by Gewirtz to include Young’s conceptualisation of “injustice” based on the “five faces of oppression” i.e.

exploitative relationships, e.g. sectarianism, racism, classism, sexism & disabilism;

processes of marginalisation and inclusion within & beyond the school system.

the production of powerlessness rather than the promotion of relationships based on recognition, respect, care and mutuality;

practices of cultural imperialism within and beyond schools- how dominant meanings of society/social institutions render the particular perspectives of groups invisible;

violence- violent practices within and beyond school, e.g. harassment, intimidation;

It was envisaged that this expanded framework could be used to inform the evaluation of education policies from a social justice perspective.

Index for Inclusion

The *Index for Inclusion* is a set of materials to guide schools through a process of inclusive school development. It is about building supportive communities and fostering high achievement for all staff and students.

Inclusion in education involves:

- Valuing all students and staff equally.
- Increasing the participation of students in, and reducing their exclusion from, the cultures, curricula and communities of local schools.
- Restructuring the cultures, policies and practices in schools so that they respond to the diversity of students in the locality.
- Reducing barriers to learning and participation for all students, not only those with impairments or those who are categorised as 'having special educational needs'.
- Learning from attempts to overcome barriers to the access and participation of particular students to make changes for the benefit of students more widely.
- Viewing the difference between students as resources to support learning, rather than as problems to be overcome.
- Acknowledging the right of students to an education in their locality.
- Improving schools for staff as well as for students.
- Emphasising the role of schools in building community and developing values, as well as in increasing achievement.
- Fostering mutually sustaining relationships between schools and communities.
- Recognising that inclusion in education is one aspect of inclusion in society.

Authors:

Tony Booth, Professor of Education, Centre for Educational Research, Canterbury
Christ Church University College

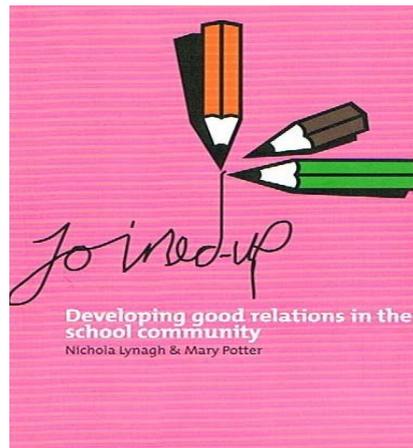
Mel Ainscow, Professor of Education, Centre for Educational Needs, University of
Manchester.

Available from:

CSIE is the Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education. It is an independent centre working in the UK and overseas to promote inclusion and end segregation. It is funded by donations from trusts, foundations and grants.

CSIE
New Redland
Frenchay Campus
Coldharbour Lane
Bristol, BS16 1QU

“Joined-Up Developing Good Relations In The School Community”



“This resource seeks to promote effective teaching and learning practice, and to provide guidance for exploring some of the more controversial issues which emerge in ways that are appropriate, safe, and create positive learning experiences”

(Lynagh & Potter, 2005)

Available from

the Corrymeela Community,
Corrymeela House,
8 Upper C rescent,
Belfast BT7,1NT.

www.corrymeela.org

Pupil Attitudes to Self and School (P.A.S.S)



<http://w3insights.pass-survey.com/pass.htm>

P.A.S.S. assesses nine core dimensions based around learner self-worth, curricular and general motivation, pupil perceptions of their learning environment, task persistence and attendance attitudes.

Assessment is standardised and nationally benchmarked for students of 8 years of age and above and is fully ICT enabled. Both online and software solutions are offered. The latter includes standalone single user software for individual assessment.

Item readability is around 7 years of age. Students with lower reading ages can still access the measure with an adult helper working to a supplied administration script.

The Psychology in Education Portfolio

Authors: Norah Frederickson & R.J.(Sean) Cameron

Availability from NFER-NELSON

Purpose

A comprehensive collection of psychological assessment measures for professionals dealing with the needs of children at school.

The Portfolio can be purchased as a Complete Set. Each booklet can also be bought individually. Measures include:

The Learning Environment - Norah Frederickson and Jeremy Monsen.

Individualised Classroom Environment Questionnaire Short Form (ICEQ-SF); My Class Inventory Short Form (MCI-SF); Student Classroom Environment Measure (SCEM); Teacher Classroom Environment Measure (TCEM); Observer Classroom Environment Measure (OCEM); Classroom Observation Schedule (COS).

Social Skills and Emotional Intelligence - Norah Frederickson and Beverley Graham.

Social Inclusion Survey (SIS); Guess Who Peer Assessment Technique; Taxonomy of Problematic Social Situations (TOPS); Child Role Play Measure; Mainstreaming Social Skills Questionnaire (MSSQ); Kusche Affective Interview – Revised (KAI-R).

Attribution and Motivation - Derek Indoe.

Coding Scheme of Perceived Causality (CSPC); Intellectual Achievement Responsibility Questionnaire (IAR); Multidimensional Measure of Children's Perceptions of Control (MMCPC); Pupil's Feelings about School and School Work Inventory (PFSSW); Motivation for Reading Questionnaire; Questionnaire

for Identifying Behavioural Problems Associated with Maladaptive Motivational Style.

Children's Self-Perceptions - Robert Burden.

Burnett Self Scale (BSS); Behavioural Indicators of Self-Esteem (BIOS); Myself as a Learner Scale (MALS); The Reading Self-Concept Scale (RSCS); Children's Shyness Questionnaire (CSQ); Who-Are-You? (W-A-Y).

Self-Regulated Learning and Behaviour - Sean Cameron.

Self-Regulated Learning Interview Schedule (SRLIS); Rating Student Self-Regulated Learning Outcomes: A Teacher's Scale (RSSRL); Inventory about Learning Approaches; Taking Control of My Own Learning; Understanding Myself: Managing My Own Behaviour; Encouraging Reflection in Teaching and Educational Psychology Practice.

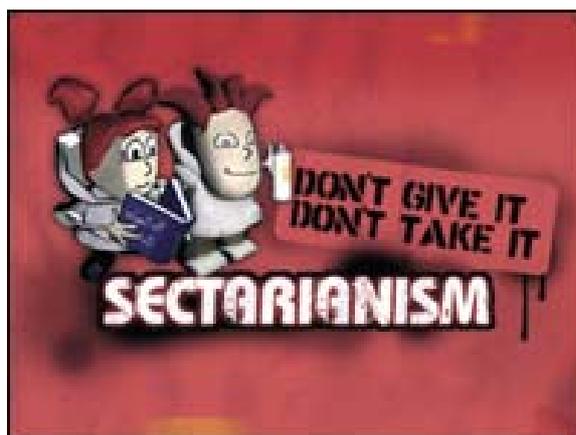
Learning Style and Metacognition - Sean Cameron and Alan Reynolds.

Structured Interview Questionnaire to Assess Pupil Learning Preferences in English and Science; Taking Control of My Own Learning; Cognitive Styles Analysis (CSA); Metacognitive Self-Knowledge (MSK) Questionnaire and Interview; Metacomprehension Strategy Index (MSI); Instructional Model for the Spontaneous Employment of Mnemonic Strategies (IMSEMS).

Sectarianism

Don't give it, Don't take it

A resource for anti-sectarian education



This resource aims to:

- Raise awareness of sectarianism and religious intolerance and encourage better understanding;
- Provide materials and examples of good practice for teachers and youth workers to use when working with young people on issues around sectarianism and religious intolerance;
- Embed or mainstream anti-sectarian work throughout a school/organisation

It incorporates a self-evaluation tool which complements the Scottish Office Education & Industry Department's document entitled "How Good is our School".

Download from: <http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/antisectionar/>

SETAQ

(Self-Evaluation Through Attitude Questionnaires)

Following a number of years of pilot work in the Western Education and Library Board, the five Education and Library Boards in Northern Ireland formed a partnership with the Quality in Education Centre (QIE: based at the University of Strathclyde, Glasgow) to initiate a regional project, collating and analysing data about the attitudes of pupils, parents and teachers. The project, which was known as SETAQ (Self-Evaluation Through Attitude Questionnaires), was further developed through Education & Software Consultants Ltd (ESC) and completed in September 2004.

Self-evaluation is seen as an important element within school development planning. This software is a useful tool that can be used to assist in the process of self-evaluation in schools.

Seta Q-Builder software, developed by ESC Ltd, in collaboration with officers within the 5 ELBs, allows schools to select from the original SETAQ questions which are based on teaching and learning, management, ethos, leadership, home-school relationships and support for learning. The software has been designed to collect and analyse parents', pupils', and teachers' attitudes. The software also allows users to develop their own questionnaires on specific topics for self-evaluation.

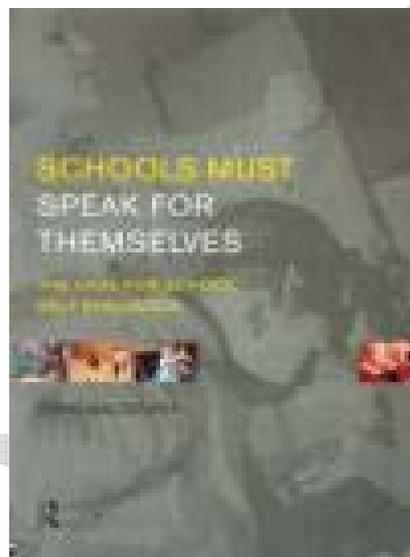
Available from Guildhall Press, Derry/Londonderry

"Guildhall Press was founded in 1979. Its original aims were to research, write and publish all aspects of local history in an objective and factual way and to create a platform for reconciliation through education by publishing material that increased cross-community understanding and acceptance"

School Must Speak for Themselves; the case for school self-evaluation

by

John MacBeath



This book is based on the highly successful publication of 1996 - Schools Speak for Themselves. In the two years since that study 50,000 copies have been sold, or distributed by the National Union of Teachers. There was a strong demand from headteachers and authorities to revisit the study and to document what had been done at school and classroom level to take ideas and practice forward.

The book describes developments in English and Welsh schools and provides examples of how the approach has been used in other countries - in Denmark, the United States and Thailand, for example. It gives clear step by step guidance on how to implement self-evaluation in a way that takes account of the views of pupils, parents, teachers and governors.

[Available from RoutledgeFalmer](#)

London • New York

UK Head Office: 2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxford OX14 4RN

Email: info.education@routledge.co.uk

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