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# Theme 6: Integration of Interdisciplinary Topics and Coherence of Subjects

## Webinar 5

24th February 2023

14.00 to 18.00

Jane Doughty and Jane English

# Theme 6: Interdisciplinary Topics and Coherence

## Purpose of theme 6:

- To review the rationale for ensuring interdisciplinary topics and coherence in the new curriculum
- To consider different approaches to creating interdisciplinary topics
- To learn from experience of Lithuanian colleagues and internationally
- To look at how the three targets - cultural identity, social integration and sustainable development can be delivered by schools

# Learning Outcomes

*At the end of this webinar we will have:*

- gained insights from two presentations by Lithuanian colleagues
- reviewed two international case studies - one primary and one secondary
- looked at how to use interdisciplinary topics to embed the competence “social, emotional and healthy lifestyle”
- considered your learning and your priorities when introducing interdisciplinary topics

# Welcome

We are delighted to welcome Loreta Zydeliene from

Integration: IB and General Programs

# Questions and Comments

There is now an opportunity to ask your questions  
and add any comments you may have

# Why Interdisciplinary Learning?

## We know that:

- Primary school teachers are positive about interdisciplinary learning – tradition of project based work
- Some scepticism about the quality of learning achieved in secondary (schools) through IDL experiences – so important to evaluate impact (Scottish Education suggests HE might consider partnering with practitioners to measure the impact and requirements of quality IDL experiences).
- Interdisciplinary learning DL requires facilitating structures and planning .... and
- It needs practitioners who are skilled in collaboration and delivery, with approaches that help learners undertake deep learning.

# Why Interdisciplinary Learning?

Interdisciplinary learning enables children and young people to:

- learn new knowledge or skills, and develop new understanding of concepts;
- draw on prior knowledge, understanding and skills;
- transfer and apply that collective knowledge to new problems or other are

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# Why Interdisciplinary Learning?

- 82% employers who recruit graduates would consider graduates across all degree subjects (The Royal Society of Edinburgh, 2019).
- Disciplines are important, but so, too, is the capacity to apply thinking in different disciplines.
- Increasing numbers of FE and HE institutions are creating interdisciplinary courses to develop more 'T-shaped' people (Heikkinen, 2018; Saviano et al 2016).

## What is T shaped?

The vertical bar of the letter T represents the depth in a single subject or discipline, with the horizontal bar expressing the ability to collaborate across disciplines

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# Interdisciplinary Topics and Competencies

Interdisciplinary topics are excellent vehicles for delivering the seven competencies

In this webinar we will consider:

Social, Emotional and Healthy Lifestyle Competence

# Social, Emotional and Healthy Lifestyle Competence

## Defined as:

- self-awareness and self-control of a person
- social awareness
- abilities for building relationships with each other
- responsible decision-making
- caring for a person's physical and mental health.

## Elements of competence for a social, emotional and healthy lifestyle

*self-awareness and self-control skills:* recognizes, identifies and manages emotions, behaves in accordance with values; recognizes personal qualities and external assistance; pursues personal and academic goals;

*empathy, social awareness and the creation of positive mutual relationships:* recognizes the emotions of others and responds to them; recognizes individual and group similarities and differences; uses communication skills in effective communication; is able to constructively prevent, manage and resolve interpersonal conflicts;

## Elements of competence for a social, emotional and healthy lifestyle

*responsible decision-making & behaviour in assessing consequences:* makes decisions taking account of security, ethical and societal factors; applies responsible decision-making skills in everyday academic & social situations; contributes to well-being of the family, school & community;

*taking care of health:* considers health as one of the essential values that determine the well-being & quality of life of a person & society; takes care of health with the help of physical activity; understands importance of a healthy diet & chooses health-friendly foods.

# Interdisciplinary topics in the framework programmes

1. Personal powers

Ideas, personalities

**Cultural identity and communality**

2. Mother tongue

3. Ethnic culture

Traditions and customs

Ethnographic regions

4. Cultural heritage

5. Cultural diversity

6..The development of culture

7..Media literacy

8. Historical self-awareness

National security of the country

History of resistance

9. Self-creation of civil society

Emergencies

Anti-corruption

Intellectual

10. Sustainable development

Socio-economic development

A world without poverty and hunger

11. Migration, solutions to geopolitical conflicts

12. Human rights, equal opportunities

13. Health, healthy lifestyle

Development of personal qualities

Overcoming stress

Taking care of your own health and the health of others

Safe behavior

Prevention of bad habits

14. Lifelong learning

15. Environmental sustainability

Environment

Protection of ecosystems, biodiversity

Prevention of climate change

Sustainable cities and settlements

Sustainable agriculture

Responsible consumption

16. Financial literacy

Knowledge of finances

Financial planning and management

Risk and return

17. Career education

# Using interdisciplinary topics to deliver: Social emotional and healthy life style competence

**Health, healthy lifestyle-** *taking care of health*

Development of personal qualities *empathy, social awareness & creation of positive mutual relationships:*

Overcoming stress

Taking care of your own health and the health of others

Safe behaviour

Prevention of bad habits .

**Personal powers –** *self awareness and self control skills:*

Ideas, personalities

**Traditions and customs -** *taking care of health*

**Human rights and equal opportunities –** *responsible decision making*

# Breakout 1

In your groups:

Please review the previous slide - discuss how you think the competence “social, emotional and healthy lifestyle” can be addressed through the interdisciplinary topics?

Which subjects can work together on this competence and what kind of learning opportunities can be created?

Report back on one key idea your group has discussed

# Break

We will now take 20 minute break

Please return promptly



# Social emotional and healthy life style competence

Embedding the social emotional and healthy life style competence

two case studies

# Nature Friendly Schools

## Primary schools involved in an interdisciplinary project that:

- Develops teachers' confidence to embrace and deliver outdoor learning
- *Helps to improve mental health and wellbeing in pupils*
- *Encourages better engagement and resilience among pupils*
- Nurtures pupils' care and concern for the environment

# Nature Friendly Schools project

## School involved get:

- training to empower teachers to lead outdoor learning
- bespoke programme suited to context of the school
- package of curriculum and non-curriculum linked lesson plans, activities, and resources
- materials required to facilitate outdoor learning
- access to a unique online community

# Nature Friendly School

## What do schools say?

“improving emotional literacy among pupils is a big part of our reason for wanting to be part of the Nature Friendly Schools project”

“the impact has included gains for the most vulnerable pupils in self-esteem, confidence and engagement with their peers and learning.”

# Welcome

We are delighted to welcome  
Rasa Raiziene - teacher of the Lithuanian language and literature and  
Renata Markeviciene - teacher of religion subject

Ugnė Karvelis Gymnasium,  
Vytautas Didysis University, Kaunas Region

16.00

# Questions and Comments

There is now an opportunity to ask your questions  
and add any comments you may have

# Breakout 2

You have had the pleasure of hearing two very interesting presentations today -

In your groups reflect on these presentations and discuss the key learning you are taking back to your role and organisation.

Be ready to share one key learning point with the whole group

# Break

We will now take 20 minute break

Please return promptly



# Case Study: Calderglen High School

## Health and Well Being – overall focus

- **mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing** – through fostering a safe, caring, supportive and purposeful environment that enables relationships based on mutual respect;
- **planning for choices and changes** – with learners experiencing opportunities which raise awareness of future choices, increase aspirations, and develop skills for making decisions and for sustaining positive destinations beyond school; and
- **relationships** – with learners developing an understanding of how to maintain positive relationships.

# Calderglen High School

This case study explores the successful implementation of health and wellbeing responsibility of all in Calderglen High School. This school's approach to implementing health and wellbeing responsibility of all is particularly interesting because:

- the school's approach focuses strongly on a 'character strengths' model where all young people and teachers are aware of their core strengths; and
- the school has a wide range of initiatives to promote positive relationships, kindness, befriending and recognition of achievements.

[www.characterstrengths.co.uk](http://www.characterstrengths.co.uk) – 24 different strengths

# Use of Character Strengths

The “character strengths” model is one of the main ways that **health and wellbeing** is integrated across the curriculum.

The five strengths of each individual are central to their work throughout the school day. They are printed in their homework diaries and young people are encouraged to reflect daily on what they did to meet their strengths - eg, what they did that was kind, brave, creative, or playful.

Staff are encouraged to refer to young people’s character strengths when evaluating their work. In geography - completed projects were handed back to students with their character strengths printed on the front. This helped teachers to recognise the strengths in their work. Young people said that they felt staff knew them better as a result of these character strengths and that they knew themselves better.

# Use of Character Strengths

In English, the personal writing unit now includes the character strengths of the young people, and asks them to include their strengths in their writings. Teachers reported an improvement in young peoples' ability to write about themselves.

*“The writing became full of reflection, and they are able to articulate themselves better. They say things like ‘I showed gratitude by...’ or ‘I showed bravery by...’ and some of their examples can be compelling.”*

*(School staff member)*

# Calderglen High School: well being activities

- **Acts of Kindness project** – students encouraged to carry out five “random acts of kindness” weekly, using small “act of kindness” cards to help them notice opportunities to practice kindness. Each card has a barcode which links to a website, pupils log their acts of kindness. Young people report this gives them “a sense of purpose”. Based on research showing this resulted in increased happiness and wellbeing
- **Inter-disciplinary learning** – programme supports pupils to work with peers to build confidence. Aged 13 spend four weeks ‘off timetable’, undertaking projects that involve working with pupils from other classes, across a wide range of subject areas
- **Band System** - The school’s pupil council (Student Voice) set up a ‘band system’ young people can nominate one another for a rubber bracelet. There are five different topics for nomination - ; Inclusion and Equality, Ambition and Inspiration, Determination and Courage, Achievement and Excellence, and Respect and Friendship. nominations are considered by Student Voice and the nominated person receives one coloured band relating to that topic. Young people encouraged to earn all five coloured bands to receive rewards - like tickets to the Olympic Games in London 2012.
- **Befriending** – Seniors undertake befriending visits, volunteer in study periods to visit older people in the community - examples of young people helping older people with their daily exercises

# What impact has it had on young people?

## Young people:

- understand that there are people they can talk to and can make informed choices about their life and learning
- understand and can demonstrate qualities / skills required to sustain different types of relationships
- said their confidence had increased, particularly through team building / peer support approaches
- felt more aware of relationships with others and consequences of their actions – both positive and negative.
- spoke of the focus the school puts on positive relationships, and all involved in this case study reported that they felt confident at approaching staff to discuss any of their concerns.

# Webinar 6

Webinar 6 is the final webinar in this theme – please come to the webinar ready to share one point you are taking from the webinars into your own practice, whether you work in a school, university or for a national organization

# Thank you

Thank you for all your contributions today

We look forward to seeing you on February 27th at 14.00