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Theme 6: Integration of Interdisciplinary Topics and Coherence of Subjects

Webinar 3

20th 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:

considered leadership priorities to make integration happen successfully

examined the role of trust when introducing change

looked at the concept of collaboration and its value to interdisciplinary work

critiqued case studies from Scottish schools

considered your priorities when introducing interdisciplinary topics

Interdisciplinary Topics in the Framework Programmes

In webinar 1 we:

- looked at the c40 topics available for interdisciplinary work
- invited you to share titles of any topics you would like to look at in more depth to clarify, explore and /or debate

Many of you confirmed you were confident about delivering all c40 topics and had lots of experience of doing so

This is excellent

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

Discussion Activity

Please unmute and share:

How will you organise the 40+ interdisciplinary topics to encourage staff to access / use the topic materials?

For example will you:

- use 30% curriculum to deliver the topics?
- regard some topics as a priority?
- allocate some topics to some age groups?
- encourage particular subjects to work in this way?

Sharing your expertise and learning from others

We would like you to share your expertise across the group

We are asking you to work in groups to share your experience of delivering one of the following topics:

- Room 1: Self creation of civil society
- Room 2: Sustainable development
- Room 3: Financial literacy
- Room 4: Human rights and equal opportunities

For those with limited experience of delivering the topics this is an opportunity to learn from others.

Sharing your expertise and learning from others

In your groups please highlight:

- The subjects involved in delivering the topic
- How long the topic was taught for and to which students
- Resources used by your teachers
- Evaluation feedback from teachers and students

Please report back on key lessons learned and advice for participants with less experience

Breakout 1

In your groups please consider:

- The subjects involved in delivering the topic
- How long the topic was taught for and to which students
- Resources used by your teachers
- Evaluation feedback from teachers and students

Please report back on key lessons learned and advice for other participants

What kind of leader are you?

"Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much."

*From a speech by **Helen Keller**, American author who was both blind and deaf*

"Creating a better world requires teamwork, partnerships and collaboration,"

Simon Mainwaring

"The leaders who work most effectively ... think 'we'; they think 'team.' They understand their job to be to make the team function.....but 'we' gets the credit.... This is what creates trust, enables you to get the task done."

Peter Drucker

"In.. the long history of humankind (and animal kind, too) those who learned to collaborate and improvise most effectively have prevailed."

Charles Darwin

What do leaders need to do to make integration happen?

- Lead from the “front”, **building trust** and commitment to interdisciplinary work
- Strengthen **leadership capacity** across the school
- Initiate curriculum mapping and identify evaluation strategy
- Organise appropriate professional development
- Promote and embed **collaboration** across the school
- Work collaboratively to create and implement a plan
- **Create effective teams** to work in interdisciplinary way

What else will you be doing to make integration happen?

Leadership Capacity

What is leadership capacity?

As an individual leader – this is your ability to change the way in which you lead to develop more effective ways to get results

What is organisational leadership capacity?

This is the strength of leadership across an organization – strength both in terms of numbers of leaders and their ability to lead effectively

In education - leadership capacity is usually considered an organizational trait

Leadership Capacity

Indicators of strong leadership capacity:

- a culture of trust and openness with a commitment to the school's vision predominates
- senior staff encourage all staff to have a commitment to whole school matters – not just their subject or year group
- staff demonstrate a commitment to the whole school - not just their subject or year group
- staff take responsibility and are proactive in ensuring school policies are implemented effectively
- staff are encouraged to take on leadership responsibilities and tasks, with senior staff support and coaching

Leadership Capacity

Please think about:

Is there strong leadership capacity in your organisation?

Is this sufficient to implement the interdisciplinary topics successfully?

What could you do to strengthen / sustain leadership capacity in your organization?

There will be an opportunity to discuss this during the next breakout

Leadership and Trust

Trust is the glue of life. It's the most essential ingredient in communication. It's the fundamental principle that holds all relationships".
(Covey, 2004)

"The starting point for any relationship is trust. Trusting relationships are also respectful relationships".
(Fink, 2005)

"To develop a trusting relationship can take a lifetime and yet that trust can be demolished in the blink of an eye"

(Brent, M and Dent, FE, 2008 – The Leader's Guide to Influence)

Leadership and Trust

Bryk and Schneider (2002) identified four components of trust:

Respect Competence Personal regard Integrity

Trust is a firm belief in the reliability, truth, ability or strength of someone or something. They found a high correlation between the levels of trust in a school and its capacity to improve:

- High levels of trust led to a one in two chance of improving.
- Low levels of trust led to a one in seven chance of improving

Leadership and Trust

To build and develop trust, leaders should:

- be open, honest and supportive
- commit to follow through
- behave consistently
- walk the talk
- model the behaviour they seek from others
- build trust into accountability processes.

Finally, recognise that building trust is hard work – trust must be earned and can be very quickly lost!

Breakout 2

In your groups discuss the significance of leadership capacity and trust in relation to the curriculum reform, particularly interdisciplinary topics.

With regard to your organization:

- How would you describe levels of trust and how can you strengthen it?
- What about leadership capacity – how strong is it now and how can you strengthen it further?

Discuss your experiences and be ready to share two key points in the plenary,

Break

We will now take 30 minute break

Please return promptly

Leadership and Collaboration

Leaders are responsible for:

Promoting and embedding **collaboration** across the school

in order to address interdisciplinary topics successfully

10 principles of professional cooperation and collaboration

1. Shared autonomy: less dependence on power, but more interdependence;
2. Shared act: a shared belief that by working together, we will give more to our students;
3. Joint research: and looking into problems, looking for solutions based on data;
4. Shared responsibility: we all teach our children, not my children;
5. Joint initiatives are encouraged: fewer individual initiatives, but more joint initiatives;
6. Purposeful dialogue about students' learning;
7. Joint work: joint training, joint planning, activity study, feedback....
8. Co-operation based on meaningful and long-term educational goals;
9. Cooperation with students, their inclusion in educational change;
10. Together, a vision of education is being developed and implemented.

By Hargreaves, A., O'Connor, M.T. (2017). Collaborative Professionalism.

Working collaboratively

Does collaboration make any difference to students?

Collective Efficacy: Effect size: 1.57

(strong, positive correlation with student achievement – Hattie's second most significant factor)

Hattie, 2016

Collective Teacher Efficacy

“Shared belief that through collective action teachers can positively influence student outcomes, including disadvantaged and disengaged students

Teachers with high efficacy show greater willingness to try new approaches, set more challenging goals and attend closely to students requiring extra assistance

Collective efficacy enables teachers to foster positive behaviour in students and raise students’ self expectations”

Hattie, 2012, 2016

Six Enabling Conditions for Collective Teacher Efficacy

Advanced Teacher Influence

- the degree to which teachers are provided opportunities to participate in important school-wide decisions.

Goal Consensus

- Agreeing goals increases collective efficacy and has a direct, measurable impact on student achievement (Robinson, Hohepa, & Lloyd, 2009)

Teachers' Knowledge About One Another's Work

- Teachers gain confidence in peers' ability to impact student learning when they have more knowledge about other's practice.

Cohesive Staff

- Cohesion is defined as the degree to which teachers agree with each other on fundamental educational issues.

Responsiveness of Leadership

- Responsive leaders show concern/respect for staff and protect teachers from issues that detract from their teaching .

Effective Systems of Intervention

- Effective systems of intervention help in ensuring that all students are successful.

Breakout 3

Discuss in your groups:

What's evidence do you have that your teachers collaborate with each other?

What action can you take to strengthen collaboration to support interdisciplinary work?

Be ready to share two key actions your group has discussed

Case studies from Scottish Schools

The Scottish Curriculum for Excellence (introduced in 2012) has a focus on competencies and encourages teacher collaboration and interdisciplinary work.

The next few slides provide insights from case studies drawn from:
Middleton Park and Queensferry Schools

the full case studies are available to download online

Case Study: Middleton Park School, Scotland

Interdisciplinary Approach:

Focus of whole school contexts for learning –provide wide range of rich, stimulating learning experiences offering breadth, relevance, challenge and depth to learning.

- The Human Body,
- Aberdeen - Past and Present,
- Structures, Making a Splash,
- A World of Imagination,
- World of Work,
- Conflicts,
- Habitats
- Inventions and Discoveries

Case Study: Middleton Park School, Scotland

Topics take account of:

- children's experiences
- principles of curriculum design.

Experiences provide enhanced levels of challenge and different contexts in which to apply learning.

Outcome:

Children's understanding deepened: secure at level ready to progress to the next level.

Case Study: Middleton Park School, Scotland

Curriculum map

- Attention given to cross cutting themes within these contexts.
- Joint staff planning
- Embedding Sustainability, Enterprise and Employability Skills in the whole school contexts.

Partners visit the school to provide support and learning activities

Partners offer expertise and help plan appropriate learning and teaching experiences using the experiences and outcomes.

This gives rich learning experiences and supports teaching staff with the delivery of more specialised aspects of the curriculum.

Case Study: Middleton Park School, Scotland

An Example: Aberdeen, Past and Present

- Students worked with the Union Street Regeneration Scheme to learn about the area's historical importance and came up with concepts to conserve the historic buildings on the street and bring them back into use.
- Students met experts - a local historian, an archivist, an architect and a visual merchandiser
- Students used their knowledge to design their businesses before presenting ideas to local councillors
- Students created a film to share their learning, <https://vimeo.com/306805804>

Students: aged 10-11

Case Study: Queensferry School, Scotland

Staff, in consultation with stakeholders, have:

- decided which areas of the curriculum should be taught as discrete subjects.
- created interdisciplinary whole school topics and opportunities for cross-stage learning
- provided learning opportunities within the ethos and life of the school
- proactively planned opportunities to support, develop and celebrate achievement
- Identified opportunities to celebrate students' personal and wider achievement in school and the wider community

Case Study: Queensferry School, Scotland

Consideration given to cross cutting themes which are developed in a range of contexts:

- enterprise,
- citizenship,
- sustainable development and
- creativity.

Effective partnerships to support curriculum have been developed: e.g. For example,

Children's author - the school's patron of reading - offers very engaging way to encourage children to see the value and purpose of learning to read.

Local theatre – students prepare and present their end of year show at the theatre - highlighting real-life relevance of learning in the expressive arts.

Case Study: Queensferry School, Scotland

Interdisciplinary: 'World of Work' programme is delivered in a variety of ways:

- Nursery: play experience
- Students aged 7: parents invited to talk about their jobs
- Students aged 9 and 10: variety of 'World of Work' workshops
- Students aged 11: work with local college: review courses/write personal statement

Business and community partners: provide role models, support, experience

- local supermarket,
- theatre,
- Further Education (FE) college.
- financial organisations

Case Study: Queensferry School, Scotland

All teaching staff at Queensferry:

- are committed to interdisciplinary work
- have a strong working knowledge of the experiences and outcomes of whole curriculum
- embrace the opportunity of being able to package the experiences and outcomes in different ways appropriate to the individual child or class.

This flexibility allows staff to involve children meaningfully in decisions about the planning of learning and how it will be delivered.

Case Study: Queensferry School, Scotland

Interdisciplinary learning pathways include emphasis on Scottish texts, cultures and history.

For example, school hosts annual Burns Supper as part of a wider celebration of Scots Language.

The school also plays an active part in the local community:

Students conduct a Queensferry heritage trail, leading tours and telling other pupils and their families about the town of Queensferry.

The school played a very active part in the opening of the new Queensferry Crossing in 2017 and embraced the learning opportunities this offered.

The opening was celebrated in school

These experiences help students learn about their town and their place in the wider world.

Case Studies: key learning

Reflecting on the two case studies from Scotland:

What particularly struck you about how the two schools developed interdisciplinary approaches?

What learning can you transfer to your context here in Lithuania?

Please be ready to share your thoughts after the break

Break

We will now take 15 minute break
Please return promptly

Learning from two case studies

What key points would you identify from the case studies:

- Commitment of, and collaboration between, staff
- Curriculum mapping – clear plan through year groups
- Taking account of local context
- Involving the community – drawing on expertise
- Futures oriented

Anything else? Please unmute to share your thoughts

Interdisciplinary Topics and Competencies

“Competencies enable students to perform in ill-defined environments, thus allowing them to navigate a fast-paced and uncertain world.”

OECD, 2019: Future of Education and Skills 2030

Webinar 4

In Webinar 4 we will be looking at how competencies support the delivery of interdisciplinary topics. We will also be hearing from a Lithuanian school leader who is sharing experiences of interdisciplinary teaching

Please come to the webinar ready to share your experience of linking the delivery the topics with the competencies

Thank you

Thank you for your contributions today

We look forward to seeing you on February 23rd at 14.00