



LANCHESTER E.P. (Cont.) PRIMARY SCHOOL

Official Report of the first Staff Training Event for the Erasmus+ Project 'Active Citizenship and Environmental Awareness Through Formal and Non-formal Education'.

The first staff training meeting was held at Lanchester E.P. Primary School with all partner countries arriving over the weekend prior to the meeting starting on Monday 25th January 2016.

The children, staff and parents in our school were very excited to welcome 21 colleagues from Romania, Sweden, Portugal, Lithuania, Czech Republic, Italy and Poland (3 from each of the countries).

Prior to the staff training weekend, I worked very closely with Madonna from Sweden and Richard Hurst who is an Education Development Advisor for Sustainability Education who works for Durham Local Education Authority. We had the job of writing the curriculum for our project based around 6 of the Global Learning Goals which had been decided in our Portugal meeting which were:

- Global Goal 6 – Clean water and sanitation
- Global Goal 7 – Renewable energy
- Global Goal 12 – Responsible Consumption
- Global Goal 13 – Climate action
- Global Goal 14 – Life below water
- Global Goal 15 – Life on land

The week began on Monday 25th January with a welcome assembly organised by the Year 5 children in our school. They had an electronic presentation of 'A Journey through Europe'. The children had researched each of the 7 countries, learnt some of the basic spoken language, researched famous landmarks, sports, food and culture of each of the countries which they then proceeded to share with our visitors and the whole school. The whole school (315 children) sang the European Anthem, our school song and some traditional North-Eastern England folk songs.

A short tour of the school followed this opening assembly so that our colleagues had an idea of life in our school.

After this, they carried out some formal observations in each of the classrooms. Our children were being taught Maths and English lessons which is typical of English schools during the morning session. Our European friends had the opportunity to observe a typical and traditional formal lesson in an English school. This was Maths and English in all classrooms where they could observe the children sitting at their desks, being taught, followed by some written work which they had to complete.

A typical English school dinner followed these observations. This is normal in England – to provide a hot meal to all children – but I know this does not occur in all European countries and schools.

After lunch, there was the opportunity to observe some non-formal lessons. This included P.E., Forest Schools, Music and Science/Geography. These were practical lessons with the children being active, creative and fairly lively. Again, this is typical in England – a more non-formal curriculum is always taught during the afternoon sessions.

On Tuesday 26th January, everyone met Richard Hurst for the first time. He delivered training to the staff for the whole day. This was very intensive for everyone, especially with our colleagues having to listen very carefully to him talking in English. During these training sessions, he gave ideas, suggestions and a variety of teaching approaches to the first three Global Goals including: Global Goal 6 – Clean water and sanitation, Global Goal 7 – Renewable energy and Global Goal 12 – Responsible Consumption. This was crucial information and key to the success of our project. He was entertaining, informative, creative, interesting and thought provoking.

Wednesday 27th January saw us all having the opportunity to observe and participate in a non-formal activity- Supergrid Wind Turbine Project (Making a model European Village of Wind Turbines to see which generates the most electricity. This was organised by the EWE Centre (Esh Winning Eco-Learning Centre) where Richard Hurst also lives. It involved a class of our older children as well as a class of older students from the local Academy and our European colleagues. This was a great activity as it enabled everyone to work together on a very appropriate activity. Half of us took part in this while the other half observed formal lessons in each of the classrooms. It was great to see old and young working together and being able to overcome the language barrier too!

These workshops took place all morning and before our community event took place in the afternoon. For our community event, we had invited parents, governors, the County Councillor (who is also a school governor), the Principal of Consett Academy (Secondary school for 1300 11 – 18 year olds) and Brian Stobie, the Local Authority International Relations Officer for County Durham. They all made a short speech at the end of the presentation when they welcomed all our partner schools to England. Following on from this, there was a traditional English Afternoon Tea for all.

Thursday 28th January was more training from Richard Hurst. For this day, we covered the following Global Goals: Global Goal 13 – Climate action, Global Goal 14 – Life below water and Global Goal 15 – Life on land. Again, the training followed a similar format to that on the Tuesday when Richard engaged all the teaching staff in his training, sharing his expert subject knowledge and giving everyone there some fantastic ideas for bringing this learning alive in the classroom in their own country.

When Richard had completed his training, we all visited the Antarctica Exhibition which was taking place at Durham Castle, organised by one of our parents. We all had the opportunity to visit the exhibition, ask questions and finally, to complete an activity about environmental issues in different countries and parts of the world. This was a very thought-provoking and useful session.

The morning of Friday 29th January saw a more local aspect of the project when Lanchester Parish Council brought displays and visited to talk to us all about environmental issues facing the village of Lanchester. Lanchester has flooded on a number of occasions, the first time in 1900 and the last time only being earlier this year, January 2016. The Parish Councillor talked to us all about how the community needs to work together to help overcome this environmental issue. She talked about the river, the needs of the village, as well as issues that work both for and against us in Lanchester. This was very informative and ideal to discuss in the context of our project.

The second part of the morning was spent observing Forest School Sessions in our woodland led by a teaching assistant and our groundsman and computing lessons on environmental issues in our Year 4 classes.

After lunch, there was a final meeting before all partners started departing. Arrangements and organisation for the next visit in Lithuania were made before finally departing.

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