

TOWERVIEW PRIMARY SCHOOL



PDMU Policy

September 2025

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Rationale

Through revisions to the Northern Ireland Curriculum, schools are seeking to show greater emphasis to Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU) as an important element of a child's learning journey. PDMU is one of the 6 key Areas of Learning in the curriculum focusing on "emotional development, social skills, learning to learn, health, relationships and sexuality education and mutual understanding in the local and global community."

PDMU supports the Northern Ireland Curriculum's aim to *"empower young people to develop their potential and to make informed and responsible choices and decisions throughout their lives."*

PDMU also supports the objectives of the Northern Ireland curriculum:

By aiding children to develop as individuals through:

- Developing self-confidence, self-esteem and self-discipline
- Understanding their own and others' emotions and feelings
- Developing the ability to talk about how they feel
- Developing their motivation to learn and their individual creative potential
- Listening to and interacting positively with others
- Exploring and understanding how others live
- Becoming aware of key issues which affect their physical, social and mental well-being and that of others
- Developing an awareness of their own personal safety
- Developing an awareness of right and wrong
- Developing an awareness of how their actions can affect others
- Understanding that values, choices and decisions should be informed by a sense of fairness
- Taking responsibility for their actions
- Developing tolerance and mutual respect for others

By aiding children to develop as contributors to society through:

- Becoming aware of some of their rights and responsibilities
- Becoming aware of some of the issues and problems in society
- Contributing to creating a better world for those around them
- Developing an awareness and respect for:
 - the different lifestyles of others
 - similarities and differences in families and people in the wider community
- Understanding some of their own and others' cultural traditions
- Being aware of how we rely on each other

According to the Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU) Guidance, *"PDMU is the key area of the curriculum which promotes emotional wellbeing in our children. It recognises the importance of nurturing not only academic skills but also social, emotional, and moral development in children. It aims to support the holistic growth of pupils, helping them become well-rounded individuals"*.

Vision for PDMU within Towerview Primary School

At Towerview Primary School, we believe that Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU) is at the heart of enabling our children to grow as confident, caring and responsible individuals.

Our vision is to nurture each child's emotional well-being, self-esteem and resilience while also developing their ability to build positive and respectful relationships with others as they prepare for the wider world.

Statutory Requirements

In the **Foundation Stage** teachers should enable children to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in:

PERSONAL UNDERSTANDING AND HEALTH

- Pupils should be enabled to explore:
 - themselves and their personal attributes;
 - their own and others' feelings and emotions;
 - their dispositions and attitudes to learning;
 - the importance of keeping healthy and how to keep safe in familiar and unfamiliar environments.

MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING IN THE LOCAL AND WIDER COMMUNITY

- Pupils should be enabled to explore:
 - their relationships with family and friends;
 - their responsibilities for self and others;
 - how to respond appropriately in conflict situations;
 - similarities and differences between groups of people;
 - learning to live as a member of a community.

In **Key Stage 1** teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in:

PERSONAL UNDERSTANDING AND HEALTH

- their self esteem and self confidence;
- their own and others' feelings and emotions and how their actions affect others;
- positive attitudes to learning and achievement;
- strategies and skills for keeping themselves healthy and safe.

MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING IN THE LOCAL AND WIDER COMMUNITY

- initiating and developing mutually satisfying relationships;
- responsibility and respect, honesty and fairness;
- constructive approaches to conflict;
- similarities and differences between people:

- developing themselves as members of a community.

In **Key Stage 2** teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in:

PERSONAL UNDERSTANDING AND HEALTH

- their self esteem, self confidence and how they develop as individuals;
- their management of a range of feelings and emotions and the feelings and emotions of others;
- effective learning strategies;
- how to sustain their health, growth and well being and coping safely and efficiently with their environment.

MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING IN THE LOCAL AND WIDER COMMUNITY

- initiating, developing and sustaining mutually satisfying relationships;
- human rights and social responsibility;
- causes of conflict and appropriate responses;
- valuing and celebrating cultural difference and diversity;
- playing an active and meaningful part in the life of the community and being concerned about the wider environment.

Aims for PDMU

At Towerview Primary School, our vision is "Together we promote high achievement, personal development and learning for life and work – success". Through PDMU, we aim to:

- Deliver PDMU through the two interconnected strands of: Personal Understanding and Health and Mutual Understanding in the Local and Wider Community
- Enhance the personal development, self-esteem and well-being of the child.
- Develop respect and responsibility for themselves, others and the wider community.
- Promote positive attitudes towards a healthy lifestyle.
- Foster an understanding of and healthy attitude to relationships and sexuality in a moral, social and spiritual framework.
- Promote responsible behaviour and the ability to make the right choices in life.
- Appreciate the responsibilities of parenthood.
- Develop children's thinking skills and personal capabilities.

PDMU links across the curriculum:

PDMU has strong links with five other area across the curriculum and can be explored through a range of topics and learning methods:

The Arts – Help children to explore ways of expressing themselves through Drama, Music, Art and Design.

Language and Literacy – Help children to develop language in ways of expressing themselves and discussing emotions and feelings through Talking and Listening, Reading, Independent Writing, Drama and role-play situations.

Maths – Use statistics to inform children and for gathering of information through questionnaires and surveys. PDMU also has strong links to Maths through NSPCC Number Day where they learn about the important work NSPCC does through engaging and fun Maths games.

PE – Help children to develop self-esteem, confidence, be aware of health and exercise. They will have the opportunity to develop team work skills, their awareness of fairness and treating others with respect.

World Around Us – Help children to understand and explore other cultures, places and times. They will also develop their awareness of their own talents, thoughts and feelings.

Whole School Approach

The mission statement of Towerview Primary School is "Together Promoting Success" where we believe that education is most effective when all members of the school community work together in collaboration with the child at the heart of all decisions. With a whole-school approach, everyone is involved in the effective learning and teaching of PDMU and all pupils, staff and parents know they are valued.

Our supportive school atmosphere should take account of such things as:

- The pupils as individuals
- Good communications
- Pastoral needs
- Multi-cultural education (Education for diversity)
- Positive achievements
- Views of all members of the school community
- Anti- racist education
- Human rights education

Effective personal development and mutual understanding depends to some extent on the ethos of the school.

Its success depends on trust between the children and members of staff of the school.

We must foster an environment in which children feel;

- fairly treated

- physically and emotionally safe

- close to others

- part of the school.

Each member of staff has a role to play in creating this environment. We can show care and support to children by;

- listening to them
- validating their feelings
- demonstrating kindness
- showing them respect.

Implementation of PDMU

The delivery of the PDMU Programme will:

- Encourage active rather than passive participation of all pupils.
- Develop personal and social skills and explore attitudes and values within a moral framework.

Several strategies will be used to effectively deliver PDMU in Towerview Primary School:

- Personal Development and Mutual Understanding will be delivered as an individual subject area with a time set on each class' weekly timetable.
- PDMU will be developed within all other areas of the Curriculum and will help to support all aspects of teaching and learning.
- Teachers will deliver PDMU through the nine statutory requirements of the Curriculum using either the Living. Learning. Together Programme or planned lessons within the TAPS framework of Towerview Primary School.
- Teachers will create an environment in which children feel fairly treated; safe both physically and emotionally; close to others; and part of the school.
- Teachers will convey care and support to children by listening to them; validating their feelings; demonstrating kindness; and showing them compassion and respect.

Pupils will acquire skills and knowledge of the following nine statutory statements within the two strands:

1. Self-awareness
2. Feelings and emotions
3. Learning to learn
4. Health, growth and change
- 4a. Safety
5. Relationships
6. Rules, rights and responsibilities
7. Managing conflict
8. Similarities and differences
9. Learning to live as members of the community

These areas are built up in a spiral manner and are revisited within each Key Stage. The children's skills and understanding will develop as they progress through each year band and explore the statements more in depth.

A caring and positive learning environment is paramount for supporting the teaching of PDMU. This allows children to express their thoughts honestly and openly. In Towerview Primary School, teachers will use a range of Active Learning Strategies where possible, this may include: circle time, play, mindfulness, talking objects, drama, case studies, debates, paired/group work, apps, websites, leaflets, activity-based learning, books, stories, puppets, games, songs and videos. Teachers may also use the Living. Learning. Together scheme, NSPCC resources and CEA's online hub within lessons.

School assemblies will be used to enhance the school's PDMU programme.

Throughout the year, we may celebrate and promote events such as Anti-Bullying Week, NSPCC Number Day, Odd Sock Day, Children's Mental Health Week and various cultural events.

Assessment of PDMU

This will be done by the class teacher through continuous monitoring and observation. Small group discussion, circle time and written work all provide evidence of children's learning.

Teachers are encouraged to upload photographic evidence of pupils' learning to the school website and create PDMU displays. This serves as an evidence bank and promotes the teaching and learning of PDMU.

Confidentiality and Safeguarding in the Classroom

The right to privacy must be respected at all times and occasions may arise will have to exercise discretion when dealing with sensitive issues. Teachers will however be aware of our Child Protection Policy and respond within that framework.

Monitoring and Evaluating

Role of the PDMU Coordinator

The PDMU co-ordinator will be responsible for monitoring the implementation of this policy. Staff will discuss the effectiveness of the programme during staff meetings. The policy will be kept under review and will be updated and amended as appropriate.

This school recognises and accepts the importance of monitoring and evaluating all aspects of Pastoral Care at every level. To this end we follow the procedures for self-evaluation as outlined in the DE document "Together Towards Improvement".

Pupil Voice

When and where appropriate, pupils should be involved in the development of PDMU. Teachers are encouraged to find out what pupils know and at the end of lessons, what else they would like to know.

In Towerview Primary School, pupil voice is increased through the School Council and Eco Council. The School Council has 2 representatives from each class from P5 to P7 and 1 representative from the Learning Support Unit. The Eco Council has 2 representatives from

each class from P4 to P7 and the Learning Support Unit. Representatives for the councils are voted for by each class with the idea in mind that they will bring forward ideas that reflect the opinions of their peers.

Coinciding with the Tappy Scheme (referred to below), the P7s are involved in a peer-mentoring role as the Tappys. This scheme allows the P7s to engage with their younger peers and create a positive environment in the playground at break and lunchtime.

As part of developing an understanding of the rights and responsibilities of the child, each class will create a class charter/contract. As pupils will have negotiated the content with their teacher, it gives them ownership and an understanding of the boundaries and expectations for a successful environment. Expectations about children's behaviour both inside and outside the classroom should be clearly stated along with appropriate consequences.

The contents should be negotiated with the children, so they understand that they have ownership of the charter. This should be displayed and referred to frequently as part of the Positive Behaviour Policy.

Tappy Scheme - Towerview Approach to Problem Solving

Our TAPS programme encourages each child to learn valuable skills that will help them to get along with others in our school community. It will encourage children to solve conflicts independently, peacefully and to avoid confrontational situations. We want to encourage our children to learn right from wrong. Children who are not taught to make choices about their own behaviour, but instead rely on other children, parents or teachers to make choices for them, have difficulty in learning self-control and self-discipline. Tom, Abbie, Polly and Simon, our TAPS gang, along with Tappy, reinforce our themes through drama. This provides a starting point for classroom discussion and other activities. Children are rewarded for displaying appropriate behaviour relative to the current theme. We appreciate the interest and involvement of parents in supporting these themes by discussing them at home with their children.

- September/October - Respect
- November/December - Kindness
- January - Self control
- February/March - Honesty
- April - Commitment
- May/June - Self esteem

Community Links

Working in partnership with parents and carers and with the wider school community is an essential element of PDMU. We seek to involve parents and keep them informed through letters, the school website and curriculum meetings. Parents are encouraged to communicate with the school if they have concerns or if there is something they would like to discuss through the Class Dojo platform or arranging a meeting with the class teacher. We foster links with the wider community through various activities such as:

- outdoor visits to the local and wider community
- school Choir performances in and around the community throughout the year
- inviting members from outside agencies to come and visit the school (police, charities, fire service etc)
- Involvement with the PTA
- Ensuring the success is celebrated in the local press
- Participation in initiatives such as:
 - ❖ Walk to School Week
 - ❖ Anti-Bullying Week
 - ❖ Children in Need
 - ❖ Fundraisers supporting the chosen school charity for the year