

Inspection Report

Introduction

Jenny Mosley's *Mental Health, Wellbeing and Positive Relationships* course was designed to empower school leaders and teachers with knowledge and practical strategies to explore and implement whole-school approaches and interventions to support positive mental health, the development of positive relationships and the promotion of the wellbeing of both pupils and teachers.

Findings

The overall quality of this course was very good.

Quality of course content

The quality of course content was very good. The inputs observed focused on methodologies that contribute to high quality circle time. This included the development of language and personal skills to empower pupils to become self-aware and competent communicators when speaking about their feelings and emotions and taking personal responsibility for their actions. Modules developed participants' capacity to work with and support all pupils, including pupils with additional needs and those who present with challenging behaviours. It provided teachers with practical information and relevant strategies they could use in classroom practice. The expectation that course participants will model and share their experiences in their individual schools was communicated to all schools and participants on this course in advance.

The use of concrete resources and play-based methodologies to promote positive mental health, well-being and the development of positive relationships were at the core of this course. Pupils from the North Inner City of Dublin attended the course over three of the five days. This provided the facilitator with an opportunity to model high quality circle time methodologies and to demonstrate the power and value of play and games in an authentic and meaningful manner. This afforded teachers and school leaders with opportunities to observe and analyse expert engagement with pupils and to explore the pupils' responses and reactions. Participants engaged in high-quality reflection activities based on their experiences and their school context.

Teachers attending the course had a broad range of experience and expertise. They were encouraged to complete a daily learning log and were provided with opportunities and resources to explore the quality of their own well-being. Issues that emerged were discussed collaboratively in workshop format. This very good practice took into account the needs of the participants, facilitated personal reflection and the sharing of good practice.

Quality of participant learning experience

Participant learner experiences were very good. Discussion, modelling, the use of resources and active learning were observed. Enhancing teachers' practice and focusing on both the learner outcomes and learner experiences of pupils, in terms of their social, emotional and learning needs, were key features of the modules observed. Links were provided to relevant reading material and resources. Participants had access to a broad range of resources directly relevant to the Irish context. Inputs included references to

Aistear, play-based methodologies and recent developments in relation to the draft Primary Curriculum framework.

Quality of course management

The quality of course management was very good. Participants created a personal learning record. They had a bank of hard copy resources and access to online resources for future use. The course tutor promoted and facilitated high-quality professional reflection, engagement and dialogue.

Quality of reflection of national priorities

The reflection of national priorities was very good. This course planned to explore how School Self Evaluation (SSE) process could be used to develop whole-school approaches to the development of well-being. The course provided an opportunity for participants to explore how whole-school strategies could be developed to promote the development of literacy, numeracy, well-being and the inclusion of all pupils in their school. Commendably, the course co-ordinator planned to use the leadership expertise among course participants to deliver and develop SSE inputs on the course.

Summary of Main Findings and Recommendations

Findings

- The course was very well organised and managed.
- High quality circle time was modelled explicitly.
- Course content focused on evidenced-based interventions and strategies that teachers could use to develop and support pupils' understanding of self, their well-being and the development of positive relationships.
- Participants engaged with the resources and course material presented while exploring the importance of language and skill development beyond the curriculum when engaging in circle time activities.
- Resources and practical strategies presented have the potential to impact very positively on teacher practice and the learner outcomes and learner experiences of all pupils.
- Participants were provided with opportunities to reflect on pupil well-being and on their own well-being. They engaged in professional reflection and dialogue.
- The course made reference to materials directly relevant to the Irish primary school context.