

# The pouring Rain project

September 2010 – June 2011

**The Pouring Rain Project** was the final part of a three year Western Isles Youth Ambassadors project funded by The Big Lottery Young People's Fund. The Project is about building self confidence and self esteem in teenagers through engaging with the outdoors. It is a positive learning experience and promotes responsibility and leadership skills in teenagers.

## Project Aims

**Develop a one day workshop with Youth Ambassadors and deliver it in schools. The workshop should:**

- Introduce children to their Human Rights.
- Work around themes of self-esteem, self-confidence and how the outdoors makes us feel.
- Use the expressive arts, particularly drawing and sculpture in relation to the natural environment.
- Use the curriculum for excellence as a guide.
- Document the project and collect feedback. Experience and monitor outcomes.

## Objectives

- A fresh approach to introduce children's rights. Something creative, entertaining, meaningful and interactive.
- To spend some time outdoors, even if it is a relatively short time in the school grounds.
- To explore their ideas around how being outside makes them feel.
- To create a piece of artwork using the outdoors and their natural environment as the inspiration.
- To collect their ideas, words and artwork through photographs and written notes so that their work contributes to and collaborates with all the work we gather from the Pouring Rain art weekends and becomes part of the final exhibition.
- To work in ways that ensure participants:
  - Feel good about themselves.

- Have their say, are listened to and are encouraged to listen to others.
- Always feel encouraged by us.
- Work creatively.
- Have fun.
- Receive and feel lots of support on the second day when they then become the workshop leaders.

## **Approach**

- Creative and arts based.
- Build self-confidence and self-esteem.
- Use the outdoors as a main theme. Be in outdoor space where possible and help to make positive links through thoughtful experiences outdoors.
- Work with local creative artists to form longer term partnerships.

## **Meeting the Curriculum for Excellence targets**

Each section of the workshop specifically ties into the Curriculum for Excellence particularly from Health and Wellbeing, Expressive Arts, Technologies (film), Religious and Moral Education, Literacy and Social Studies. There are some key points that have been taken from the Children's Parliament involvement with Curriculum for Excellence \*(please see end of document), importantly we are working outdoors and supporting a key curriculum initiative:

**'How outdoor learning can contribute by connecting children and young people with the natural world, our culture and society'.**

A key strand of Curriculum for Excellence, Mental Health and Wellbeing cuts across the whole programme. Opportunities to raise young people's confidence, resilience and self-esteem are integral across the project which also raises the expectations and future aspirations of young people.

## **Development of the one day workshop**

We worked with two teams of Youth Ambassadors over several weeks to devise the workshop. This allowed time for the workshop to stem from their own ideas thus making it more personal. The workshop is made up of the following;

- **Children's Rights performance with audience participation** – looking at the rights they felt were most relevant to them and how the UNCRC is something that affects their lives daily, using drama as a medium.

- **Self-Esteem Hats** – thinking about what gives us self-confidence and self-esteem, through making hats and sharing positive ideas.
  - **Visualisation** – of an outside space and making positive links to the outdoors.
  - **The Cairn** – Looking at the benefits of spending time outdoors. This a large papier mache prop made with the help of a local artist. The Cairn has twenty removable stones each with a statement about the benefits of being outdoors. Each stone is a tactile way of starting discussions about the physical and mental benefits of being outdoors.
  - **Outdoor Art Activities** – making a drawing of a 360\* view, drawings with your eyes closed, responding to outdoor sounds and words and making marks in response to weather.
  - **Repeat Patterns** – Using natural shapes as inspiration for design. This followed on from a weekend drawing workshop by a local artist.
- 

## **Feedback and Outcomes**

### **The Project and the wider community:**

The Project has received very positive feedback from pupils, staff and adults in the community. After working in Liniclate School, the Youth Ambassadors who were leading the workshop were put forward by the school to the education council meeting in Stornoway for demonstrating an outstanding achievement in their work. We were then invited by the head of guidance and learning support to do further work in these school classes in June. The Eco film is to be shown at the first Uist Eco Film Festival at the end of April, this is being organised by Taigh Chearsabhaigh, the local arts centre. This is a chance for Youth Ambassadors to show work they have made alongside professional film makers and speakers. This is a three day event which they will be attending. In June we are bringing all the work together for a week long exhibition in Nunton Steadings for schools and the general public. This is a chance to demonstrate the skills they have acquired and to share them with their community. Taigh Chearsabhaigh have also shown an interest in exhibiting The Cairn and the work that has taken place around it.

### **Feedback from school pupils about the workshops:**

*'It was good to get a break from normal school work. It made me think about the benefits of being outside. I learnt more about children's rights. I liked leading the workshop (mark making). It might make them feel more comfortable NOT being taught by a teacher.'*(Emma S2 pupil Paible)

*'It was good to work with people only a few years older because they understand you better. To the people that were here...it was fun and good. Learned to express myself and not to care about what people say.'*

*'I enjoyed everything that I did today. It was really fun. All the pupils that taught us made awesome teachers. Thanks for giving us the chance to learn something different.'* (S2 pupil Liniclate)

#### **Feedback from the adults twilight session:**

*'It was clear from the evening that the pupils are acquiring an excellent range of skills – their communication skills are really impressive. They were articulate and thoughtful, enthusiastic and committed. Please remind them to keep a record of all these acquired skills, and the invaluable activities which showcase these skills, and to include them in the near future when they will be called upon to provide personal statements as they contemplate future careers.'* (Anne Reid, Head of Art, Lionacleit)

*'Interesting to find out about some of the work done by the Children's Parliament. Fantastic work! So many creative ways used to give pupils opportunities for expression.'* (Catriona Morrison, Community Education)

*'Thanks to Sian, Caitlin, Maragaret, Sian and Matthew for all their hard work. It can't be easy presenting to an older audience – especially one containing teachers! Very impressive preparation – clearly a lot of thought and a lot of work also – went into it and it was very thought-provoking. Impressive range of work. i.e. drawing in all its varieties.'* (adult participant)

#### **Feedback from workshop about how the outdoors can make you feel:**

*'I'm drawing the spiral shape of the tree. The air is so dramatically different, so clear and pure. It makes you feel different.'* (Alice)

*'Lots of trees, branches crossing, like looking up through a mesh, like a starry sky'* (Eilidh)

---

#### **Meeting the Curriculum for Excellence targets:**

These are some key points that have been taken from the Children's Parliament involvement with Curriculum for Excellence, importantly we are working outdoors and supporting a key curriculum initiative:

**'How outdoor learning can contribute by connecting children and young people with the natural world, our culture and society'**.

**The following shows how each section of the workshop specifically ties into the Curriculum for Excellence particularly from Health and Wellbeing, Expressive Arts, Religious and Moral Education, Literacy and Social Studies:**

1. Drama to introduce Children's Human Rights with audience participation.

- Inspired by a range of stimuli, I can express and communicate my ideas, thoughts and feelings through drama. EXA 0-13a / EXA 1-13a / EXA 2-13a
- By exploring the ways in which we use and need rules, I can consider the meaning of rights and responsibilities and discuss those relevant to me. SOC 1-17a,
- I have participated in decision making and have considered the different options available in order to make decisions. SOC 1-18a )
- I can share my developing views about values such as fairness and equality and love, caring, sharing and human rights. RME 2-05b
- As I explore the rights to which I and others are entitled, I am able to exercise these rights appropriately and accept the responsibilities that go with them. I show respect for the rights of others. HWB 0-09a / HWB 1-09a / HWB 2-09a / HWB 3-09a / HWB 4-09a

## 2. Self-Esteem Hat workshop.

- I am aware of and able to express my feelings and am developing the ability to talk about them. HWB 0-01a / HWB 1-01a / HWB 2-01a / HWB 3-01a / HWB 4-01a
- I know that we all experience a variety of thoughts and emotions that affect how we feel and behave and I am learning ways of managing them. HWB 0-02a / HWB 1-02a / HWB 2-02a / HWB 3-02a / HWB 4-02a )

## 3. The Cairn (exploring the benefits of spending time outdoors).

- How outdoor learning can contribute by connecting children and young people with the natural world, our culture and society, Through contributing my views, time and talents, I play a part in bringing about positive change in my school and wider community. HWB 0-13a / HWB 1-13a / HWB 2-13a / HWB 3-13a / HWB 4-13a
- Having explored my local area, I can present information on different places to live, work and relax and interesting places to visit. SOC 2-10a
- I can recognise progress and achievement by discussing my thoughts and feelings and giving and accepting feedback. HWB 1-24a

## 4. Visualisation of outside places.

- I am learning skills and strategies which will support me in challenging times, particularly in relation to change and loss. HWB 0-07a / HWB 1-07a / HWB 2-07a / HWB 3-07a / HWB 4-07a)

## 5. Outdoor art activities.

- I can respond to the work of artists and designers by discussing my thoughts and feelings. I can give and accept constructive comment on my own and others' work. EXA 0-07a / EXA 1-07a / EXA 2-07a/ EXA 3-07a,
- Inspired by a range of stimuli, I can express and communicate my ideas, thoughts and feelings through activities within art and design. EXA 0-05a / EXA 1-05a / EXA 2-05a)

**Through participating and then going on to lead the workshop many of the above points apply to the entire workshop;**

### **From Literacy**

When I engage with others, I can respond in ways appropriate to my role, show that I value others' contributions and use these to build on thinking. LIT 2-02a

When listening and talking with others for different purposes, I can:

- \* share information, experiences and opinions
- \* explain processes and ideas
- \* identify issues raised and summarise main points or findings
- \* clarify points by asking questions or by asking others to say more. LIT 2-09a

I am developing confidence when engaging with others within and beyond my place of learning. I can communicate in a clear, expressive way and I am learning to select and organise resources independently. (This may include images, objects, audio, visual or digital resources) LIT 2-10a / LIT 3-10a

### **From Health and Wellbeing**

Through taking part in a variety of events and activities, I am learning to recognise my own skills and abilities as well as those of others. HWB 1-19a

### **Religious and Moral Education**

I am developing respect for others and my understanding of their beliefs and values. RME 0-07a / 1-07a / RME 2-07a / RME 3-07a / RME 4-07a

I am developing an increasing awareness and understanding of my own beliefs and I put them into action in positive ways. RME 1-08a / RME 2-08a / RME 3-08a / RME 4-08a

I can explain why different people think that values such as honesty, respect and compassion are important, and I show respect for others. RME 2-09c

I can demonstrate my developing understanding of moral values through participating in events and projects which make a positive difference to others. RME 3-05b