

Introduction

We are working on a joint Caritas Austria and Newcastle University Baseline assessment and Regional Program called “DARE” to better understand the best way of introducing Self Organised Learning Environments (SOLE) and Training of teachers in Mindfulness in Education across Ukraine, Moldova and Romania. Newcastle University has been involved in research for over two decades and as leader of this Baseline Assessment we are committed to generating knowledge and understanding that can be used by other researchers, policy makers and teachers. This is part of Caritas Austria sponsored program.

Background

Newcastle University and Caritas Austria are all committed to improving children’s learning in underserved communities across the world.

- Newcastle University is experimenting to understand the best practices for self-organized learning; process where educators spark curiosity by asking children to explore a big question using the Internet and working together in small groups.

Baseline Assessment

The goal for the baseline assessment which will be carried out between April and May 2017 is to identify the status quo in terms of teaching and learning practices and attitudes in schools so to be able to integrate innovative approaches proposed in DARE regional Program to achieve high impact and scalable models to start a SOLE in the most underserved communities across the globe.

Evaluating of the DARE project

In partnership with Caritas, Newcastle University (UK) is carrying out an evaluation of DARE across all of the schools and day-care centres involved in the programme in Ukraine, Romania and Moldova. As far as possible, this evaluation is designed to complement that which you may already be carrying out in your school or centre and we hope that you may find it useful within your practice.

The aim of the evaluation is to understand the impact of the programme on learning for children, teachers and families, as well as on the relationships between these groups. We really need your collaboration and support with this evaluation process. If we can establish strong, trustworthy evidence of how the programme impacts on children’s learning, teacher well-being and parent/carer understanding of children’s learning, we have a better chance of improving and sustaining the programme in the future.

We are looking for evidence that children are developing learning habits which enable them to Dream, Achieve, Realise and Express (DARE). Within each of these aspects of DARE, we

have defined 2 related learning habits. The tools to be used in the evaluation are designed to provide evidence of the development (or lack of development) of these habits and how these might empower children to develop their 'voice'. The habits are discussed further in the DARE training but can be summarised as follows:

Aspect of DARE	Learning habit	Definition
DREAM	Creative imagination	Production of purposive ideas which are original to the child/ children
	Aspiration	Identification of and ambition to achieve educational, occupational or social goals
ACHIEVE	Resilience	Inclined to take on learning challenges where the outcome is uncertain, to persist with learning despite challenge and to recover from setbacks and failures
	Critical thinking	Reasoned, purposive, reflective thinking used to make decisions, solve problems and master concepts
REALISE	Motivation	The energetic pursuit of <i>learning</i> goals (good learning habits as opposed to 'performance goals'), involving self-regulation of behavioural, emotional, cognitive and environmental resources.
	Achievement	Fulfilment of learning goals and the reflection of this within academic study
EXPRESS	Self-efficacy	One's belief in one's ability to succeed in specific situations or accomplish a task.
	Positive social engagement	Active participation in a community or society.

Attached to this information sheet is a table which summarises the evaluation tools, their purpose, who needs to use them and when they should be used (page 4). You will also have (or have had) the opportunity to attend training sessions in which the evaluation is described in more detail. Please find below, some information relating to the tools and instructions for their use.

SDQ (Self Description Questionnaire)

This questionnaire is completed by the children at the beginning, middle and end of the programme (with exceptions where children have limited periods of attendance in your setting). Teachers and parents/carers also complete a shortened version of the questionnaire, answering the questions in relation to each child they teach (teachers) or the child they care for (parents/carers). This will allow us to see whether adult and child ideas of the child's learning correspond or differ.

The SDQ is a well-proven tool, designed by psychologists, which has been used frequently to measure children's concepts of themselves and their learning. The reason that the question has numerous, repetitive questions, is that it is designed to give a *reliable* picture of the child's view of their abilities as a learner. It asks the same question in different ways to check that answers are consistent.

The SDQ is concerned with self-perceptions relative to four non-academic areas (Physical Ability, Physical Appearance, Peer Relations, and Parent Relations) and three academic areas (Reading, Mathematics, and school in general), as well as a global perception of self. It will

help us to establish whether children's perceptions of themselves have developed as a result of the DARE programme.

Instructions for using the SDQ are provided at the top of the questionnaire. Teachers or social workers/facilitators should emphasise that this is NOT A TEST. Try to keep the atmosphere relaxed but quiet. Ideally, children should not discuss their answers with each other. Questions should be read out one at a time, giving time for children to complete their answer before moving on to the next.

ProQol questionnaire (Professional Quality of Life Questionnaire)

This questionnaire is completed by teachers and social workers leading the DARE work in schools and centres. The ProQOL is the most commonly used measure of the negative and positive affects of helping others who experience suffering and trauma. The ProQOL has subscales for compassion satisfaction, burnout and compassion fatigue. Instructions for completion can be found on the questionnaire.

Field notes template

This template is completed by teachers and social workers following SOLE sessions. It is designed to help us to understand contextual factors affecting the learning experience on a particular day and to capture evidence relating to the development of the learning habits outlined above.

DARE handbook

This booklet is completed by children following SOLE sessions. There is space for children to reflect and report on 30 sessions over 1 year. Children will be provided with a new handbook at the start of year 1 and again at the start of year 2. It contains reflective exercises which are designed not only to provide evidence for research but to support children in developing learning habits through the process of reflection. The idea is that by developing a language for and understanding their own learning (becoming 'metacognitive'), children can develop strategies for learning and improve their learning achievements. This theory is based on a substantial body of academic research.

Semi-structured interviews

At the end of each year there will be interviews with a sample of teachers, social workers, parents and children. These will be carried out by local and national coordinators, sometimes accompanied by Newcastle University researchers (where appropriate). All interviewees will be provided with a list of questions in advance of the interview. The interviews will revolve around the questions but there will be space for further discussion about the project.

Summary of the evaluation design for DARE

PARTICIPANTS	Tools to capture IMPACTS	Tools to capture development of learning habits	Tools to capture CONTEXT
Children	Baseline (Nov 2017), mid (June 2018), post (May 2019): - SDQ (self-description questionnaire)	Each year: -DARE handbook	May – October 2018, May – June 2019 Semi-structured interviews conducted by National/local program coordinators with Newcastle University (NU) staff where possible/appropriate
Teachers	Baseline (Nov 2017), mid (June 2018), post (May 2019): -Version of SDQ for each child -ProQol questionnaire	Field-note template for each SOLE session.	May – October 2018, May – June 2019 Semi-structured interviews conducted by National/local program coordinators with NU staff where possible/appropriate
Parents/carers	Baseline (Nov 2017), mid (June 2018), post (May 2019): -Version of SDQ for child		May – June 2019 Semi-structured interviews with National/Local program Coordinators

Timetable for evaluation

Tool applied	S e p 1 7	O c t	N o v	D e c	J a n 1 8	F e b	M a r	A p r	M a y	J u n	J u l	A u g	S e p	O c t	N o v	D e c	J a n 1 9	F e b	M a r	A p r	M a y	J u n	J u l	A u g	
Basic participant data obtained	■																								
Allocation of reference numbers		■																							
Baseline SDQ: children, teachers, parents			■																						
Baseline ProQol: teachers			■																						
Methodologies applied			■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Handbooks completion			■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Semi-structured interviews: teachers and children									■	■	■	■	■	■								■	■		
Semi-structured interviews: parents																						■	■		
Mid SDQ										■															
Mid ProQol										■															
Post SDQ																							■		
Post Proqol																							■		
Analysis and development/reporting					■	■							■	■	■							■	■	■	■

DARE evaluation: definitions for learning dispositions being researched

Aspect of DARE	Dispositions	Definition for practitioners	Definition for children	What it looks like	Examples in practice	Related literature
DREAM	Creative Imagination (CI)	Production of purposive ideas which are original to the child/ children	Using your imagination to produce new ideas and solve problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing, drawing or talking about a new idea in connection with a goal • Solving a real-life problem in a novel way • Imagining something impossible in real-life, in relation to the process of solving a real-life problem 	Practitioners will be invited to imagine and construct examples	<p>Greene, M. (1995) Releasing the Imagination</p> <p>Kaufman and Beghetto (2009) Beyond Big and Little: the four C model of creativity</p> <p>Pierucci et al. (2014) Fantasy orientation constructs...developmental benefits</p> <p>Robinson, K. (2001) Out of Our Minds: Learning to be creative</p> <p>Zittoun and Cerchia (2013) Imagination as expansion of experience</p>
	Aspiration (ASP)	Identification of and ambition to achieve educational and occupational goals	Having hopes and dreams for your future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fantasy choices about future career paths • Tentative choices about future career paths • The transformation of fantasy choices into realistic choices • Identifying with a worker/learner • Developing habits of industry/learning 		Wahl (2000) Factors affecting the occupational and educational aspirations of children and adolescents

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expectation or desire to go on to further or higher education (college or university) • Expectation of apprenticeship or training in specific trade or industry 		
ACHIEVE	Resilience (RES)	Inclined to take on learning challenges where the outcome is uncertain, to persist with learning despite challenge and to recover from setbacks and failures (Wells and Claxton 2002, 28 in Sterling 2017). Resilience may be social, emotional or academic.	Being resilient in your learning: never give up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging and staying engaged with learning when it is challenging or unpredictable • Producing good outcomes in spite of serious threats (Masten 2001) • Behaviour at any point on a sliding scale from <i>surviving</i> to <i>coping</i> to <i>thriving</i> • Emotional resilience: overcoming negative feelings and carrying on • Social resilience: overcoming negative social circumstances with peers, community and/or at a socio-economic level • Academic resilience: overcoming academic challenges and remaining engaged in learning 		<p>Gavriel, J. (2015) Tips on inductive learning and building resilience</p> <p>Masten, A.S. (2001) Ordinary magic: Resiliency processes in development</p> <p>Seale, J, Nind, M. and Simmons, B. (2013) Transforming positive risk-taking practices</p> <p>Sterling, S. (2017) Learning for resilience, or the resilient learner?</p>
	Critical Thinking (CT)	Reasoned, purposive, reflective thinking used to make decisions, solve problems and master concepts (from Rudd)	Finding your own answers to challenging questions by researching, imagining and making careful judgements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflective, analytical thinking • Taking an overview (‘meta’ knowing) of a concept or issue • Using <i>inquiry strategies</i> which could be applied more widely (Brown 1997) • <i>Inquiry strategies</i>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • constructing and asking pertinent questions 		<p>Brown, A (1997) Transforming schools into communities of thinking and learning about serious matters</p> <p>Dewey, J. (1933) The process and product of reflective activity</p>

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pursuing answers alone or with others • researching and analysing information • using criteria to confirm or dispute the appropriateness of an answer (changing our mind for a legitimate reason) • self-correcting our existing understanding • imagining possibilities • judgement: reasoned acceptance or rejection of possibilities • production or expression of a reasoned conclusion • Application of individual/combined skills (listed above) • Critical thinking as developed habit, applied automatically to an issue or situation 		<p>Kuhn, D. (1999) A developmental model of critical thinking Lipman, M. (1991) Thinking in Education Rudd, R. (2007) Defining Critical Thinking</p>
REALISE	Motivation (M)	The energetic pursuit of learning goals (as opposed to 'performance goals' and 'looking smart'). The pursuit of learning goals involves self-regulation of behavioural,	Always being ready to improve how you learn and having goals for your learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enthusiastic engagement in learning activities • Positive attitude towards challenges in learning • Believing that intelligence is changeable/abilities are malleable • Engaged discussion about learning • Engaged pursuit of imposed goals related to learning • Self-construction and pursuit of goals related to learning 		<p>Dweck, C. (2000) Self-theories Fan and Williams (2010) The effects of parental involvement on students' academic self-efficacy, engagement and intrinsic motivation</p> <p>Mellard et al. (2012) Dispositional factors affecting motivation...adult...programs Pintrich and Schunk (2002) Motivation in education</p>

		emotional, cognitive and environmental resources. Internal motivation (as opposed to external), where willingness and desire to engage in activity is because it is a means to an end (Pintrich and Schunk)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of the personal importance of a goal • Intrinsic motivation (motivated by the desire to learn new skills, master new tasks, or understand new things) • Self-management of: behaviour, feelings, thoughts, focus, environment, in the service of achieving learning goals • Seeing failure as an opportunity to learn about learning * • Treating failure to meet goals as an opportunity to try a different way (learning is an endless journey)** 		<p>Pintrich...other papers</p> <p>Roesser and Peck (2009) An education in awareness: self-motivation and self-regulated learning in contemplative perspective</p>
	Achievement (ACH)	Fulfillment of learning goals and the reflection of this within academic study	Working hard to achieve your learning goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cognitive: demonstrate developed thinking in any of the DARE areas • Social (relationships with peers, teachers, family) • Emotional (mastery of feelings or a shift towards a more positive approach to learning) • Academic (positive impact on regular school work) 		
EXPRESS	Self-efficacy (call this self-confidence for children) (SE)	One's belief in one's ability to succeed in specific situations or accomplish a task. One's	Being confident that you can do something	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confidence enables increased engagement in a task (e.g. speaking up in class, taking on a challenging question, working with others when this is usually difficult, sharing an idea, not asking the teacher) 		<p>Bandura, a. (1982) self-efficacy mechanism in human agency</p> <p>Bandura, A. (1997) Self-efficacy: the exercise of control</p> <p>Dweck (above)</p>

		sense of self-efficacy can play a major role in how one approaches goals, tasks, and challenges		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single demonstrations of confidence • Habitual/consistent demonstration of confidence 		
	Positive Social Engagement (PSE)	Active participation in a community or society. Commitment to stay in a group and interact with other members (Zhang et al.)	Working with other people to help make things better	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participatory activities in a social group • Participating in a range of social roles and relationships • Interaction with members of a group • Peer group engagement • Class or school engagement • Family engagement • Community engagement • Civic engagement (political activity, membership, volunteering etc.) 		Biekart and Fowler (2012) A civic agency perspective on change Forestiere, C. (2015) Promoting civic agency through civic engagement activities Gerado and Pellegrino (2017) Youthscaping our classrooms: nurturing youth civic agency through youth centred pedagogies McCall, L. (Social capital, civic engagement and civic literacy: reviewing, refining and defining the concepts
VOICE	Directed self-expression (V)	Empowerment	Speaking up and being listened to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitual self-expression (comfortable and normal to form and express a personal opinion or contribute to a collective opinion or idea) • Students in dialogue, discussion and consultation on issues that 		Cook-Sather, A. (2014) The trajectory of student voice in educational research Fielding, M. (2001) Students as radical agents of change

				<p>concern them, individually or collectively</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to make others take us seriously and respond to our ideas • Having active agency in our own learning experience, informing and shaping the course of our own learning • Willingness and capacity to influence decision making processes • Willingness and capacity to take on consultative roles • Willingness and capacity to act as critical participants • Willingness and capacity to affect or even instigate change, in schools, centres or communities, individually or as part of a group/community • Awareness of own rights and capacity for self-emancipation 		<p>Fleming, D. (2015) Student voice: an emerging discourse in Irish education policy MacBeath et al. (2005) Pupil voice: purpose, power and the possibilities for democratic schooling</p> <p>McGregor, J. (2014) In progress internationally: student voice work in four countries</p> <p>Rudduck, J. (2006) The past, the papers and the project</p> <p>Rudduck and Fielding (2006) Student voice and the perils of popularity</p>
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