

PDMU / THE WORLD AROUND US · P1–P7

PDMU agus Oideachas Comhroinnte

Personal Development, Mutual Understanding & Shared Education — P1–P7

Key concepts

1

PDMU (Personal Development & Mutual Understanding)

NI's distinctive PSHE equivalent. 'Mutual Understanding' is the element unique to Northern Ireland — it specifically addresses relationships between the two main communities, their different traditions, and what they share.

2

Shared Education

A government-funded programme that brings together pupils from controlled (mainly Protestant) and Catholic-maintained schools for joint activities. Not the same as integrated education — pupils remain in their separate schools but work together.

3

Integrated education

Schools where children from both Catholic and Protestant (and other) backgrounds are educated together full-time. Around 7% of NI pupils attend integrated schools — numbers are growing.

4

Community background

In NI, 'community background' refers to Protestant/Unionist/Loyalist (PUL) or Catholic/Nationalist/Republican (CNR) traditions. Schools are asked to be aware of pupils' community backgrounds and ensure all feel included.

5

Parity of esteem

A principle enshrined in the Good Friday Agreement — both main traditions in NI deserve equal respect and recognition. Schools are expected to give parity of esteem to both traditions.



PDMU — classroom activities for mutual understanding

- Map where different traditions live in the local area — discuss what makes the community
- Different ways of celebrating the same date (e.g. 12 July, 15 August)
- Visit a different type of school — or use Shared Education links
- Shared history: what do both communities share? (music, sport, food, landscape)
- Shared sporting heroes — both traditions follow GAA and soccer
- Our school's history — research when the school was founded and for whom
- Interview a family member about their childhood — share with class
- Stories from both traditions — read a book from each perspective
- The names of our streets — research their origins (Gaelic? Scots? English?)
- Designing a symbol both traditions could use — what would it look like?

