Knowledge hub
-
Collection of best practices

Summary of the best practice

1. Title of the best practice (e.g. name of policy, programme, project, etc.) *

   Anti-Bullying and Online Safety Programme for Schools

2. Country or countries where the practice is implemented *

   Ireland

3. Please select the **most relevant** Action Track(s) the best practice applies to *

   - ☑ Action Track 1. Inclusive, equitable, safe, and healthy schools

   - ☐ Action Track 2. Learning and skills for life, work, and sustainable development

   - ☐ Action Track 3. Teachers, teaching and the teaching profession

   - ☐ Action Track 4. Digital learning and transformation

   - ☐ Action Track 5. Financing of education

4. Implementation lead/partner organization(s) *

   Dublin City University

5. Key words (5-15 words): Please add key descriptive words around aims, modalities, target groups etc. *

   Youth, Empowerment, Increase Self-Efficacy, Bullying Intervention and Prevention, Whole Education, School Bullying, Online Safety

6. What makes it a best practice? *

   FUSE is as a well-documented research-based programme designed to comply with UNESCO's Whole Education Approach to tackle bullying and online safety in schools, and designed to support the wider wellbeing curricula in schools. The overall goal of the programme is to connect everyone in the school community to work together to tackle bullying and promote online safety, ensuring a more inclusive and safe school. FUSE is designed as a suite of workshops to empower the school community to engage in open discussion and build capacity in addressing bullying in their school. Research tells us that when school communities work together and are supported by the wider education system they can successfully develop initiatives and strategies to tackle bullying and promote online safety.

Description of the best practice

7. Introduction (350-400 words)
   This section should ideally provide the context of, and justification for, the practice and address the following issues:

   i) Which population was affected?
   ii) What was the problem that needed to be addressed?
   iii) Which approach was taken and what objectives were achieved? *

   i) Which population was affected? Students aged between 9 and 14 years of age are eligible to participate in the FUSE Anti-Bullying and Online Safety Programme. The programme is aimed at the whole school community (students, school staff and parents) who all play a role in intervention and prevention of bullying in schools. Teachers are trained to deliver the programme with the school wellbeing curriculum and receive support from the FUSE Education team.
   ii) What was the problem that needed to be addressed? From recent research with schools, Ireland is experiencing a heighted focus on bullying and online safety issues. A study at DCU found that approximately one in three Irish teenagers have been bullied offline and one in 10 Irish teenagers have been victimized online (Foody, Samara, O'Higgins Norman, 2017). An increase in Cyberbullying during the pandemic has also resulted in bullying issues filtering into the school environment, negatively impacting on student's education and ability to learn.
   iii) Which approach was taken and what objectives were achieved? FUSE was created based on 25 years of research by the DCU Anti-Bullying Centre. 14 workshops were developed in the areas of bullying, cyberbullying and online safety. Teachers were trained on how to deliver the programme in their school. A survey instrument was also created by DCU researchers to enhance the programme, evaluate its effectiveness & assess if the programme makes a difference to students' and teachers behaviour and confidence in their ability to notice, respond and report bullying incidents.

8. Implementation (350-450 words)
Please describe the implementation modalities or processes, where possible in relation to:

i) What are the main activities carried out?
ii) When and where the activities were carried out (including the start date and whether it is ongoing)?
iii) Who were the key implementation actors and collaborators? (civil society organizations, private sector, foundations, coalitions, networks etc.)?
iv) What were the resources needed (budget and sources) for the implementation?
*

i) What are the main activities carried out? Since the programme was launched in 2019, teachers across Ireland have attended FUSE training sessions, which are delivered online via Zoom. Once a teacher has completed an online training session, they are given access to an online portal containing a repository of resources which consist of PowerPoints, Teachers Notes, Videos and student activity sheets. All workshop content has been made easily accessible for teachers to ensure smooth and simple delivery in their classrooms. Workshops topics are:
Workshop 1 - Bullying and the Importance of Noticing
Workshop 2 - Cyberbullying and the Importance of Noticing
Workshop 3 - Empathy and Relationships
Workshop 4 - Bystanders and Responsibility
Workshop 5 - Respond and Report
Workshop 6 - Student Voice in the School Anti-Bullying Policy
Workshop 7 - Reflecting on Social Media
Workshop 8 - Online Safety - Privacy and Sharing Online
Workshop 9 - Online Safety - Cybersecurity Awareness
Workshop 10 - Understanding Hate Speech - Part I
Workshop 11 - Understanding Hate Speech Online - Part II
Workshop 12 - Image Sharing
Workshop 13 - A World made of Stories
Workshop 14 - Do you trust the information you find online?

ii) When and where the activities were carried out (including the start date and whether it is ongoing)? FUSE was launched in September 2019 and has been delivered each academic year to date. It is delivered in school time and is aligned with the school wellbeing framework. This enables schools to deliver FUSE resources whilst also meeting the needs of the wellbeing curriculum. The programme is also underpinned by UNESCO's Whole Education Approach and each pillar of the framework is identified in a teacher handbook.
iii) Who were the key implementation actors and collaborators? (civil society organizations, private sector, foundations, coalitions, networks etc.)? The programme is funded by Meta, Rethink Ireland and is supported by the Department of Education in Ireland. The programme was created and implemented by the Anti-Bullying Centre, in Dublin City University. It is the first research based Anti-Bullying and Online Safety programme of its kind in Ireland.
iv) What were the resources needed (budget and sources) for the implementation? Funding was required for the FUSE team of researchers, a project manager and FUSE Education Coordinators. Costs to deliver the project include staff salaries, development and design of resources, website costs. The programme is offered free of charge to all schools across the island of Ireland.

9. Results – outputs and outcomes (250-350 words)
   To the extent possible, please reply to the questions below:

   i) How was the practice identified as transformative? (e.g., impact on policies, impact on management processes, impact on delivery arrangements or education monitoring, impact on teachers, learners and beneficiary communities etc.);
   ii) What were the concrete results achieved with regard to outputs and outcomes?
   iii) Has an assessment of the practice been carried out? If yes, what were the

   i) How was the practice identified as transformative? (e.g., impact on policies, impact on management processes, impact on delivery arrangements or education monitoring, impact on teachers, learners and beneficiary communities etc.) FUSE is a research-based programme that educates students on how to tackle bullying and raise awareness of online safety. Research is an important part of FUSE in order to enhance the programme, evaluate its effectiveness & assess if the programme makes a difference to students' behaviour.

   Since the launch of the programme, the FUSE team has endeavoured to evaluate its effectiveness in both primary and post primary schools. Therefore, a survey that examines students' self-efficacy in (a) tackling offline and online bullying and (b) being aware of online safety issues was created and offered to all participating FUSE primary and post primary schools in Ireland. The post primary survey was distinguished into six key areas in which students were asked to rate their self-efficacy, namely how confident/assured they are to:

   1. Notice offline and online bullying either as targets or bystanders.
   2. Understand the Importance of reporting offline and online bullying either as targets or bystanders.
   3. Understand that it is their Responsibility to report offline and online bullying either as targets or bystanders.
   4. Know how to report an offline and online bullying incident either as targets or bystanders.
   5. Report offline and online bullying either as targets or bystanders to a teacher, a member of the school staff, or a trusted adult.
   6. Know how to stay safe online and avoid online risks.

   ii) What were the concrete results achieved with regard to outputs and outcomes? Each year, FUSE publishes an Impact Report, which can be found using this link: https://antibullyingcentre.ie/fuse/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/FUSE_20_21_Impact_Report-1.pdf
   It was noted that students reported high levels of self-efficacy in tackling bullying and cyberbullying and also scored high in addressing Online Safety, as a result of participating in the FUSE Programme.

   iii) Has an assessment of the practice been carried out? If yes, what were the results? Each year, the FUSE programme is evaluated with students and teachers. For Post-Primary School Student Surveys, we have currently, 999 valid responses. On the Teacher Survey we currently have 193 valid responses. This data is currently being processed and will be ready in early June, which will identify the impact of FUSE for 2022. A paper on the FUSE instrument and the programme is also currently under academic review and will be published this summer.

10. Lessons learnt (300 words)
    To the extent possible, please reply to the following questions:

    i) What were the key triggers for transformation?
    ii) What worked really well – what facilitated this?
    iii) What did not work – why did it not work? *

i) What were the key triggers for transformation? Students find the content of the workshops engaging. We use young people in our video scenarios to promote discussion among the class groups. The workshops are based on topics that are relevant and currently (i.e Image Sharing) and students feel that the content is relevant to their day to day experiences of bullying offline and online.
ii) What worked really well – what facilitated this? Co-creation of workshops with young people themselves has worked really well. Providing students with some research on a topic and working with them to develop scripts and scenarios that reflect the issues they face regarding bullying and cyberbullying has ensured high levels of engagement. For teachers, finding out how they wanted resources presented and listening to their feedback has ensured teachers across the country can easily access workshop resources and enables smooth delivery in the classroom.
iii) What did not work – why did it not work? Initially we advised schools that they must completed all FUSE workshops. After year two, we saw that many schools were struggling to complete all workshops and some were successful and managed this easily. Schools can now deliver the most appropriate workshops for their students, as they see fit. This recognises that not all schools are the same and allows them to select the topics that suit their own schools best, ensuring higher levels of engagement with FUSE.

11. Conclusions (250 words)
    Please describe why may this intervention be considered a "best practice".
    What recommendations can be made for those intending to adopt the
    documented "best practice" or how can it help people working on the same
    issue(s)? *

    Please describe why may this intervention be considered a "best practice". In the first year of
    FUSE, 91 schools registered with the programme. In year three, we currently have 385 schools
    registered on FUSE. This is based on schools communicating with each other and
    recommending the resource as "best practice" for schools. The Government also produced a
    report last year and recommended "the innovative FUSE Programme developed by DCU's Anti-
    Bullying Centre be rolled out to all primary and secondary schools as a model of best practice, in
    liaison with the Department of Education to ensure adequate funding and resources are
    provided". The full report can be read in the link provided in the next text box below.

    What recommendations can be made for those intending to adopt the documented "best
    practice" or how can it help people working on the same issue(s)? The FUSE programme is
    developed as a suite of resources to empower schools to tackle bullying and promote online
    safety. The programme is underpinned by up-to-date research and can be adapted to suit other
    school environments in other countries. The topics covered in FUSE will be relevant to any
    teenager, regardless of their country of origin or background. Tackling bullying is a global issue
    and International research suggests that there has been some success with programmes aimed
    at tackling bullying and online safety issues as part of a whole school initiative. However, whole-
    school based initiatives have often been limited in their success because they have often failed
    to recognise that the local school exists within a wider education system and community that is
    supported and maintained by society. FUSE is designed to comply with UNESCO's Whole
    Education Approach, which ensures that local school initiatives recognise the importance of the
    interconnectedness of the school with the wider community. This includes educational,
    technological and societal systems, as well as societal values and pressures; all of which can
    impact on the prevalence and type of bullying and online safety issues that occur among young
    people.

12. Further reading
    Please provide a list and URLs of key reference documents for additional
    information on the "best practice" for those who may be interested in knowing
    how the results benefited the beneficiary group/s. *

    https://antibullyingcentre.ie/project/fuse/

    https://antibullyingcentre.ie/fuse/

    https://antibullyingcentre.ie/fuse/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/FUSE_20_21_Impact_Report-
    1.pdf

    https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/33/joint_committee_on_education_furthe
    r_and_higher_education_research_innovation_and_science/submissions/2021/2021-08-
    23_report-on-school-bullying-and-the-impact-on-mental-health_en.pdf