### Case Study

**Establishment name:** Small Schools Curriculum Group  
**Lancashire no:** 08/064  
**Contact name:** Anne Mains (Mossy Lea Primary School)  
**Email:** head@mossylea.lancs.sch.uk  
**Telephone no:** 01257 423107  
**Award granted:** Innovative Practice  
**Project title:** Progression Grids developed to support personalised provision and implementation of the new curriculum

### Project summary

This project has been developed by a cluster of Headteachers from four small schools across the authority. As Headteachers of small schools, we have worked closely together to develop an innovative approach to planning and assessing pupils’ progress across three key areas of the Primary Curriculum. We met on a number of occasions to review personalised learning and creative approaches to teaching and learning in small schools. With each school at a very different phase in their curriculum development, approaches to teaching and learning were shared and a common area for development was identified. We all identified the need to raise the profile of the essential skills for learning and life in our schools and bring these areas of learning to the forefront of our provision. We have developed progression grids to support the planning and assessment of: Emotional Skills, Personal and Social Skills and Thinking and Learning Skills. The progression grids fit in with each school’s vision to provide personalised learning opportunities for every child and support learners in achieving three principle aims: Confident Individual, Successful Learner, and Responsible Citizen. This innovative approach to planning and assessment will support each school’s transition to full implementation of the new primary curriculum.

### Specific aspect of practice to be accredited?

Close collaboration across four small schools in developing Essential Skills for Learning and Life Progression grids. The grids will support staff across small schools in bringing three core areas of the curriculum to the forefront of personalised provision: Social Skills, Learning and Thinking Skills, Personal and Emotional Skills.

### Aspect of Every Child Matters addressed:

- [ ] Be healthy
- [ ] Stay Safe
- [ ] Enjoy and achieve
- [x] Make a positive contribution
- [x] Achieve economic well-being
What were you hoping to achieve?

- An innovative and manageable approach that could be adapted to suit the needs of each school and their varying contexts.
- A resource that would support staff within each school in developing their knowledge and understanding of transferable skills.
- A resource that would support personalised provision and tracking of skills through the primary phase.
- A resource that would engage pupils in identifying their own next steps in their learning journey.

How did you identify the need for this practice?

As Headteachers of 4 small schools we met together as part of a small schools initiative. We looked at how we plan and all agreed we wanted to make the curriculum exciting and stimulating for children but with thorough coverage of key skills.

We built on this by agreeing a common ground of which skills we wanted our children to learn. We felt skills in numeracy, literacy and the other national curriculum subjects were well mapped out and accessible to teachers but that the learning and life skills so crucial for building success were not broken down into manageable steps for progress.

Consequently we felt this led to these important areas of learning being taught incidentally rather than being planned into a skills-based curriculum. We were unsure of how to build learning and life skills into the curriculum, so we knew other teachers would feel the same and decided to develop a progression of learning and life skills document which could be used alongside planning.

Briefly describe the main characteristics of the school

All four schools are small, rural primary schools.

What did you do?

In order to develop this we split the essential skills for learning and life into sections as in the new national curriculum (at that time it was the rose review). These were as follows:

- Learning and thinking skills
- Personal and emotional skills and
- Social skills.

We researched an area each (2 people for learning and thinking skills) and broke down each area of the essential for learning and life into small learning steps. This took a long time and though we used some reference materials and the internet, most of it was by thinking together of the small progress steps children make in
their thinking. We edited these statements and felt the most manageable format to use would be in an A4 grid split into early, middle and late skills like the new national curriculum. So we then edited our work into this format.

**Which members of the establishment and/or wider community have been involved and what was their role?**

Four headteachers. School staff as necessary, for example trialling the resource. School advisor.

**How has the progress of the project been monitored and evaluated?**

Reviewed by the group in meetings.

**How has the practice been modified or improved during development?**

We modified the grids to ensure they were manageable and fitted into the new curriculum.

**What has been the impact of the project on pupils’ learning, achievement or enjoyment and how has this been measured?**

This project is a new initiative and is now at the point of being ready to use throughout the schools. Early indications of impact show that:

- Staff now understand and value the importance of developing the Essentials for Learning and Life and can see clearly how to provide personalised opportunities for all the children in school.

- Staff are beginning to show an increased awareness of how to plan for and develop the Essentials for Learning and Life skills through classroom provision and whole school opportunities.

**What are the next stages in the development process?**

For the Essentials for Learning and Life progression grids to become a firmly embedded part of the schools' assessment, tracking and target setting systems. This includes using the progression grids to set targets on Individual Education Plans and Behaviour Plans for children with SEN where appropriate as well as when creating personalised learning plans for children who demonstrate high levels of inter and intra personal skills.

For all staff to understand how to provide learning experiences and opportunities that enable each and every child, regardless of academic ability, to make good progress in terms of thinking and learning skills, social skills and personal and emotional development.

For the progression grids to be used with children to help them to understand their individual strengths and weaknesses in terms of the Essentials for Learning and Life Skills and the steps they can take to develop their thinking and learning skills, social skills and emotional and personal development.
For the progression grids to be shared with and understood by parents to enable them to understand their own child's individual strengths and weaknesses, develop a wider knowledge of all aspects of learning and purposefully support the child's development away from school.

To share good practice with other schools.

**What aspects of this practice may be useful for other establishments to consider?**

This may be a useful resource for schools who want to raise the profile of the essentials for learning and life. The project has been an ideal opportunity for four rural primary schools to share good practice and network. This is to be recommended as we have all gained and insight into each other's school and shared experiences.