

**Malta University Holding Company Ltd**



**Provision of A Pilot Study**  
**as part of the**  
**Enhancing Equal Rights Project**  
**for the**  
**National Commission for the Promotion of Equality**

**Final Report**

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## 1.0 Introduction

This report describes the development, implementation and evaluation of a pilot study carried out as part of the project *JUST/2012/PROG/AG/3717 Enhancing Equal Rights*. The aim of this project was to bring about a culture of rights; a culture where diversity is seen as an added-value; and where equality and non-discrimination are promoted. This vision is considered to be achievable by stimulating debate, raising awareness, and further bringing about a change process in mentalities, attitudes and perceptions. All the activities included in this project work towards achieving this vision which also reflects the vision of the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE).

The overall objectives of this PROGRESS project were as follows:

- To better implement the national legislation on non-discrimination;
- To develop the national policy to combat discrimination and promote equality beyond legislation; and
- To foster the dissemination of information on EU and national policy and legislation in the anti-discrimination field.

The project involved the organisation of a number of activities. One of the deliverables included a pilot study. This activity involves developing and trialling of educational material for students within the compulsory school age and which promotes equality with children at both primary and secondary level. This educational material developed needed to fall within the current educational curriculum and had to be integrated within already existing subject areas taught at different levels – at both primary and secondary level of education. The pilot study will thus demonstrate whether it is possible to educate about equality and mainstreaming through integration within currently taught subject areas making up the compulsory school curriculum. The aim of the pilot study is to see how feasible it is to mainstream equality education within the current compulsory education. The aim is thus to see how possible it is to educate about aspects related to equality, diversity and discrimination within all the subject areas at both primary and secondary level of education.

## 2.0 Aims and Objectives of the Study

Previous studies carried out in Malta in relation to aspects of equality mainstreaming and discrimination as well as review of the educational curriculum have recommended that there should be the development of education material which teachers could use to educate students, directly or indirectly, about these aspects.

This pilot study was one response to the recommendations made and involves the participation of primary and secondary school children and teachers in the development, preparation, and delivery of lessons targeting such issues. The training methods developed are to be tested in the field.

The purpose of this study was thus that of assessing the impact and effectiveness of different training methods and training modules through piloting such tools with both primary school pupils (aged 5 – 11) and secondary school students (aged 11 – 16). Moreover the pilot study also aimed to gauge the effectiveness of these materials in terms of impact and outcome also on the children's parent/guardians and guardians.

The pilot exercise thus involved the following actions:

- Based on studies carried out by NCPE on Measurement of Discrimination among Youths: a qualitative research study and The National Minimum Curriculum: an equality review report, together with a literature review were to be developed, to gather a pool of ideas which lead to the development of a structured methodology for the integration of equality education within the current compulsory education curriculum;
- This methodology was to be adapted to be done in the Maltese Education system through the Maltese curriculum, shedding insights into how these changes may be implemented, which subjects could be successfully equality mainstreamed, and identify the skills and resources needed to implement such changes (both in terms of school material and in terms of teachers' resources and awareness). This methodology has been built on already existing equality mainstreaming tools that have already been implemented in other EU Member States which have the potential to be transferable to Malta;
- Based on the previous actions, at least 4 training methods were to be devised with the objective of equality mainstreaming that will be pilot tested (by respective teachers) with: primary school students (1 training method for the Years 1, 2 and/or 3, and another

training method for Years 4, 5 and/or 6), and secondary school students (1 training method for Forms 1 and 2, and another training method for Forms 3, 4 and 5)

- Based on these methodologies, four practical training modules, were to be developed such as lesson plans: on equality and non-discrimination, as well as modules using the methods identified above, two for primary and another two for secondary schools are to be designed. These training modules are to be tied to core subjects; a language subject (preferably English Language) and a science subject. These training modules had to be aimed at:
  - making students aware of the existence of NCPE, its role and the services it provides;
  - promoting a wider view of equality and acceptance of diversity on various grounds (namely, gender or family responsibilities, age, religion or belief, race and ethnic origin; sexual orientation; and gender identity;
  - enhancing their knowledge on the negative effects of discrimination and of stereotypes that they may have on different groups of persons;
  - promoting and exploring positive actions (where possible) in response to the different needs of different groups;
  - disseminating knowledge among students about how and where to report cases of discrimination and encourage them to take appropriate action if they experience or witness cases of discrimination; and
  - working on the self esteem of youth such that they have the courage to report cases of discrimination;
  - focusing on the development of strong values by combating discrimination, challenging the societal norm, challenging xenophobic attitudes, and empowering students through sensitisation and by giving them the know-how on how best to address such discriminatory attitudes and behaviours, thus instilling in them the values with which they can become young ambassadors of change.

The training modules were to be piloted using the different training methods. This exercise required that:

- The researcher may hold meeting/s with the teachers/ schools selected for the pilot study, prior to the finalisation of the teaching methods and modules. This will ensure that the methods and modules being proposed by the expert are in fact feasible, and moreover, it will increase the participating teachers' ownership of the initiative.

- A two-hour training session be conducted with the teachers who will be involved in piloting the methods and modules to go through the documents which are going to be supplied to them as well as to discuss any concerns they might have regarding the piloting of these methods and modules.
- The carrying out of a pre-evaluation with the students participating in this pilot study before testing the training modules in order to measure their knowledge on equality and non-discrimination. A similar albeit different pre-evaluation is to be done also with the teachers, and at least five (5) parent/guardians and/or guardians from each class so as to be able to gauge the wider / short-term ripple effect of the methods and modules being introduced;
- The carrying out of a post-evaluation with all the students participating in this pilot study in order to measure the effectiveness of the training modules used;
- The conduction of at least one (1) face-to-face interview with all the teachers participating in this pilot study, gathering in-depth feedback on each training method and training module used by each teacher;
- The organisation of focus groups with at least 5 parent/guardians or guardians of students from each class participating in this pilot study. Where focus groups are not possible, the researcher is to conduct face-to-face interviews;

This report provides detail and information about how all of these actions have been taken and implemented in the execution of this contract.

### **3.0 Literature Review**

The concepts of equality and accepting diversity encompasses differences in gender, people with disabilities, people of different religious faith/beliefs, different age, gender identity and sexual orientation. A Eurobarometer study (European Commission, 2012) shows how discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation (being gay, lesbian or bisexual) – 46% stating that it is still widespread, and gender identity (being transgender or transsexual) (45% stating that it is still widespread) still exists at European level, even if to different degrees. In the case of people aged 55 and over, discrimination was found to be considered rare or non-existent by 50% of the respondents, whereas 45% believed that this type of age discrimination was widespread. Discrimination on the grounds of being aged 30 or younger was considered to be far less common (18%). Two out of five Europeans believed discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief is widespread (39%) while more than half of Europeans stated that it was rare or non-existent (56%). A little over half (56%) of the respondents believed that gender discrimination still exists. Discrimination on the grounds of disability was considered to have decreased since 2009. These results may be an improvement on the results obtained in 2009, with Eurobarometer reporting lower levels of discrimination. In 2012 more Europeans considered discrimination on the grounds of disability to be rare or non-existent in their country (50%) than widespread (46%), whereas the opposite was the case in 2009 (43% vs. 53%). However, the same Eurobarometer survey also showed that over half of all Europeans also think that, as a result of the economic crisis, discrimination in the labour market on the grounds of disability (53%) and ethnic origin (52%) increased.

There are estimated to be about 150 regional and minority languages in the European Union – although the exact number varies depending on how one defines a language. These languages may be specific to a region e.g. Catalan, Basque, Breton, Welsh, Sardinian, or languages spoken by a minority in one state (European Commission, 2004). Malta is not with limited diversity. In recent years the issue of the integration of minorities within Maltese society has been closely

related, and imprecisely, to immigrants from Africa, even if they are less than half the number of foreigners belonging to different ethnic minorities arriving in Malta (Calleja, Cauchi & Grech, 2010). The Maltese education system is experiencing this in religion, and ethnic origin. The number of ethnic minority students in the local education system at compulsory level is not negligible and there are no significant differences in the number of children from ethnic minorities between the primary and the secondary sectors (Calleja, Cauchi & Grech, 2010). The challenge of managing to cater for the education of this growing diversity of mother tongues present in schools while also building bridges with immigrant families in schools across Europe are the two key issues addressed at European level in the green paper “Migration & mobility: challenges and opportunities for EU education systems” (Commission of European Communities, 2009). This has particular relevance to Malta. The European report by Eurydice ‘Integrating Immigrant Children into Schools in Europe’ shows that in Malta there is still no provision, in the form of official publication about the education system, in the mother tongue of immigrant children (Eurydice, 2009). The education system also lacks a structure for the provision and use of interpreters, and resource persons responsible for the reception and orientation of immigrant pupils in order to promote and ensure better integration of such families. There are still efforts which need to be made at legal (ECRI, 2013), policy and action level.

The principles of equality and diversity coupled with aspects of discrimination need to be tackled by schools, both in the way that they operate and consequently mainstream equality, as well as in teaching which also includes issues of equality and diversity as transversals across all the specific subject curricula. Nonetheless, it has been shown how by making discussions of gender diversity a recurring theme in the curriculum, students can learn to question restrictive social systems, and think more inclusively about gender expression and identity (Ryan, Patraw & Bednar, 2013). Prejudices against people based on any of the six<sup>1</sup> grounds of discrimination are structural and reflect societal beliefs. But these biases also reflect individuals’s beliefs (Barnett, 2011). Education can thus be a strong tool to fight the existence of these inequalities

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<sup>1</sup> Six ground of discrimination: Age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity and religious belief

both through practicing equality within the school as well as through activities aimed at educating children to celebrate diversity and to combat any form of discrimination.

### **3.1 What do we know about the situation in Malta?**

The National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE) as well as other institutions in Malta work to promote equality and encourage the mainstreaming of equality. NCPE has conducted and/or commissioned research related to issues of relevance to Malta (NCPE, 2009) and has been involved in a number of projects which review existing legislation (NCPE, 2007), map out the type and degree of discrimination experienced in Malta (Cachia Comodini, 2010; NCPE, 2012), and promote forms of equality and equality mainstreaming. The local situation with respect to equality and equality mainstreaming, and how to combat any form of discrimination against particular groups is regularly followed by international organisations such as the International Movement Against All Forms of Discrimination and Racism (IMADR), Minority Rights Group International, and the European Network against Racism (ENAR, 2014) among others. Knowledge of emerging trends and issues need to be gained and updated if a real effort is to be made to educate and foster better attitudes and behaviours with respect to diversity, equality and mainstreaming in present generations for a better. One pertinent study conducted by Gatt (2012) probed experiences of discrimination among youths. This study showed that youths have limited knowledge and awareness of NCPE and its role and work, even though they possess a good degree of knowledge on equality and discrimination overall and particularly with respect to five of the six grounds (age, gender, religious belief, ethnicity and sexual orientation). Youths were also found to have limited degree of knowledge of Maltese laws related to equality and discrimination, whilst women tended to express higher levels of knowledge on equality and discrimination. This study showed how overall, youths in Malta expressed positive values and attitudes with respect to promoting equality, accepting diversity, taking positive action for diversity as well as in combating discrimination. Youths also reported very few instances of discrimination, with the most common being on the basis of age and gender. The majority of the

respondents reported being witness to a number of instances of discrimination, mainly on the basis of ethnicity and sexual orientation. They reflected a tendency to downplay the situation, stating that they were afraid or did not know what to do when experiencing situations of discrimination. Respondents expressed a wish to learn more about equality and discrimination, NCPE's role and services as well as what to do to report cases of discrimination.

The underreporting of instances of discrimination by particular groups in Malta was probed in research commissioned by NCPE: 'Underreporting of discriminatory incidents in Malta: A research study' on (Comodini Cachia, 2010). This research identified instances of discrimination in education, employment, shopping, finding accommodation, in the neighbourhood, in use of public transport, when approaching police and public officers, in places of entertainment and also in places of worship. Most of these are in fact found within the locality itself. As one particular interviewee in this study stated '*diversity education is needed from a young age where children are taught to appreciate diversity*' (p29). This respondent expressed how at times he feels treated differently because others are ignorant of the doctrine of his faith. This study also highlighted a low level of awareness of the entities that could provide assistance or redress or that although aware of how these entities felt, they were difficult to access.

The research 'Racial Discrimination in Malta: A qualitative Study' (NCPE, 2011) commissioned by the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality showed that notwithstanding the existing protective measures in relation to discrimination on the grounds of ethnic origin, minority ethnic groups in Malta, still experience discrimination and harassment to a certain extent. This study highlights the role that teachers have and how important it is to train them in recognising and respecting diversity in terms of gender, ethnicity, age, religion, disability, and sexual orientation; and how there needs to be mainstreaming of equality within organisations. Teachers also have the added responsibility of promoting positive attitudes among the students they teach.

### 3.2 Practising Education for diversity

The National Minimum Curriculum, or since 2011 the National Curriculum framework (NCF) are the official documents which lay down the type of education that each and every student of compulsory age in Malta is to receive. One exercise commissioned by NCPE involved a review of the National Minimum Curriculum and how it recognised the importance of equality and encouraged ways of combating discrimination, and to promote respect for diversity, equality and mainstreaming practices (Pisani, 2010). In this review, classrooms are considered to have the potential to provide space for healthy dialogue that is both theoretically and practically inclusive. The argument put forward is that children should be encouraged to participate in sharing different views and opinions. The approach adopted should be through discovery rather than indoctrination, involving an exploration of issues and understanding of the importance of diversity rather than imposing a set of beliefs, inclusion rather than exclusion, and above all, equality.

This review (Pisani,2010) puts forward a number of recommendations at policy, administration and school level. Of particular interest are the recommendations at school level which include actions such as:

- Developing a set of lesson plans organized by subject, and set specifically to what is found in the National Minimum Curriculum and subsequent syllabi, that directly or indirectly address issues of equality, whilst ensuring that schools and educators have access to such resources
- Setting up an Equality Education Library, at a location accessible to educators, from which they could access resources to use in the classroom setting in order to directly or indirectly address issues relating to equality and discrimination. Moreover, as part of this effort, developing a complementary database of online materials that may be used;

- Organising diversity days and equality-themed events as well as introducing such themes into annual events in order to raise awareness within the school as well as within the wider community (for instance having an equality themed Sports Day)
- Promoting student fora and exchanges amongst different schools in Malta as well as between Maltese schools and other schools (in Europe, the Euro-Med area as well as outside of the region) through which students experience different cultures
- Organising specialised training courses in order to acquaint educators with issues of equality, including sensitisation sessions about topics that are of specific relevance to the Maltese context;
- Organising programmes and competitions targeted at both schools and individual students, that recognise awareness-raising efforts (policy and projects), and that give an added value to the education received by the children and the indirect impact on families and communities
- Developing a School Equality Audit Pack, to be utilised by schools and Colleges to evaluate the policies, processes and educational material
- Developing a series of in-service trainings for teachers on topics related to equality and discrimination
- Developing a series of colouring books for children which could be utilized in class as activity books (in tandem with, or outside of, set lessons) through which issues of equality would be explored and discussed in an informal and semi-structured manner
- Establishing intra-school debate competitions – general or language-specific (for students learning languages) in which equality issues (amongst others) would be debated in a respectful manner.

(Pisani, 2010, p 62)

Schools in Malta, in summary, should foster an environment wherein they promote equality and diversity with respect to: age, gender, disability, ethnicity; religion and sexual orientation. They should create an environment where different ethnicities and cultures are recognised and cherished (Calleja, Cauchi & Grech, 2010) people of different religious faith, or with disabilities

are accepted and treated on an equal basis. Respect for people of different ages is to be fostered, equality between men and women promoted, and persons of different sexual orientation understood and accepted. It is to be understood that equality mainstreaming in education should be the vehicle through which mutual respect is demonstrated by developing and promoting among children an understanding of the negative effects of prejudices and stereotypes and instead cultivating in children from an early age the ability to take and respect different viewpoints (Commission of the European Communities, 2008). Different educational approaches such as human rights education, education for democratic citizenship and education for mutual respect and understanding, are considered vital for all our societies if they are to be inclusive, promote equality and fight any form of discriminatory behaviour which arises through judging and treating people based on stereotypes and prejudice. These educational approaches promote equality, empowerment and participation as well as conflict prevention and resolution (Council of Europe, OSCE/ODIHR, UNESCO, OHCHR; 2009).

### **3.3 Human Rights and Equality Education**

Human rights education began modestly with popular-education programs and as part of the UNESCO Associated Schools Program in 1953 (UNESCO 2003). There was a gradual increase in initiatives involving diverse activities and projects for human rights education, particularly during the 1970s and 1980s which also increased the visibility of the Human Rights Education movement. After the World Conference on Human Rights in 1993, human rights education became a central concern for the international community (Suarez, 2007). The UN Decade for Human Rights Education began in 1995, and since then many nations have reported activities and programs which are in line with the decade (United Nations 1998). Today, human rights education has grown considerably and is supported by many organisations such as the United

National and the Council of Europe. Another step forward can be identified in the collaboration that is growing among international organisations. This can be identified mainly in the form of an International Contact Group on citizenship and human rights education which was set up in 2011 with a view to ensure close co-operation among regional and international initiatives in this field. This group brings together the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE/ODIHR), the European Commission, the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO), Organization of American States (OAS) and the Council of Europe.

Human rights educators hope to develop self-aware and knowledgeable citizens willing to acknowledge and address injustice, even in the face of state authority (Tibbitts, 2002). Tibbitts (2002) identified three approaches to contemporary human rights education practice: the Values and Awareness Model; the Accountability Model; and the Transformational Model. Each model is associated with particular target groups, contents and strategies. The first model focuses on transmitting knowledge about human rights leading school curricula to include human rights to link this up with fundamental democratic values and practice (Tibbitts, 1994). Under the Accountability Model, learners are already expected to be directly or indirectly associated with the guarantee of human rights through their roles in society. All educational programming is aimed to provide learners with the responsibility to protect individual and group rights. In the Transformational Model, human rights education programming is achieved through empowering the individual, both to recognize human rights abuses as well as to fight and prevent such occurrences. This model involves pedagogical techniques (based partly on developmental psychology) that involve self-reflection and support within the community of learners (Tibbitts, 2002).

A good approach for effective human rights education demands an interdisciplinary, cross curricular approach in order to provide: information about fundamental rights; develop critical

thinking skills and a willingness to question the status quo; as well as challenge students to apply global theoretical principles also to local situations (Krain & Nurse, 2004).

A number of educational programmes in the area of Human Rights have been developed by international organisations. In 1995, the Council of Europe published the handbook 'All Different, all Equal Education Pack: Ideas, resources, methods and activities for informal intercultural education with young people and adults' (Council of Europe, 1995) which includes a compendium of activities which educators can adapt and use to tackle different aspects of equality issues. The Council of Europe also have the Pestalozzi programme. The aim of this programme is to promote the Council of Europe's values of democracy, respect for human rights and dignity and the rule of law into the practice of education (formal, non-formal and informal) and to support member states in the move from education policy to education practice in line with these values. The Pestalozzi programme achieves this through the training activities that it offers to teachers across Europe to develop the transversal attitudes, skills and knowledge which are necessary for the maintenance and further development of democratic societies; in particular, competences such as: critical observation from different perspectives; actions based on respect for human rights and dignity; the ability to act democratically and to co-operate; understanding of diversity and the ability to live in diversity; understanding of the past and the present, and the ability to project oneself into the future; the ability to communicate across all kinds and types of borders; critical, responsible and beneficial use of the media environment; the ability and readiness to continue to learn throughout one's life. One of the recent initiatives by the Council of Europe included drawing up the competences for intercultural education (Council of Europe, 2012).

At a European level, the European Agency for Fundamental Rights promotes learning about rights related to human dignity, freedom, equality, solidarity, citizens' rights and justice. They produced, for example, an educational booklet (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2012) with information and education materials to raise awareness about fundamental rights among 12-to-18-year-olds. Amnesty International also produced material to share examples of good practice (Amnesty International, 2010). The number of educational material

that is available on the net and which teachers can make use of to promote knowledge and positive attitudes towards human rights are numerous and provide a rich library of resources.

### 3.4 Equality Mainstreaming

Article 10 of the European Treaty provides a legal basis for ensuring that there is non-discrimination and equality mainstreaming at European Union level as well as within the EU Member States. This Article states that ‘in defining and implementing its policies and activities the Union shall aim to combat discrimination’ on the grounds of gender, racial or ethnic origin, disability, age, religion or belief and sexual orientation’(European Parliament, 2013). Equality mainstreaming has emerged from gender mainstreaming where the focus was on gender but has since been extended to all the six<sup>2</sup> grounds of discrimination. In equality mainstreaming, ensuring equality becomes the main mode of working and doing things.

A definition for equality mainstreaming is provided by the European Commission (2011) document which provides a compendium of good practices. Non-discrimination/equality mainstreaming in this document is defined as

*‘the systematic incorporation of non-discrimination and equality concerns into all stages of the policy process. It addresses the grounds of gender, racial or ethnic origin, disability, age, religion or belief and sexual orientation. It is implemented in policy making, policy implementation and policy review’.* (p8)

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<sup>2</sup> Six grounds: age, gender, religious belief, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability

The implications of this definition are that mainstreaming as a mechanism must be systematic in that it has to be applied across all practices; broad in scope as it seeks to eliminate any form of discrimination and advance equality; comprehensive as it covers all the six<sup>2</sup> grounds of discrimination; and holistic as is it present at any stage of activity (Ibid).

Equality mainstreaming is important for the education sector. Schools need to implement equality within as an organisation. They also need to mainstream equality in the curriculum that they provide. This requires that all teachers need to be trained in equality and diversity issues as well as have the pedagogical skills to mainstream equality within their subject area.

### **3.5 Curricular Approach**

Education for Equality, respect for diversity and mainstreaming are related to efforts made in human rights education. Human rights education promotes a rights-based approach to education. The United Nations (2005), highlight that this aspect is expected to be stated explicitly in the objectives of educational policy development and reform, as well as in quality standards of education. There is also the recognition for the need of the training of trainers, the training of head teachers, pre-service and in-service training of teachers, and the training of other educational personnel (United National, 2005). The local formal education sector is still the main tool and mechanism to reach the majority of a society (Mihir, 2009). Human Rights educators argue in favour of incorporating human rights values and awareness as a key element in education at both primary and secondary level schooling. They call for a revision of school curricula in order to integrate human rights education into the curriculum at all levels of formal education, produce human rights training and educational materials for students and teachers, and develop in-service teacher training courses (OSCE, 2012).

Educating about aspects of Human Rights Education can be started from the early childhood itself. Parent/guardians should have a prime role in supporting human rights education during

these years. In Portugal, one finds one example of good practice based on the concept of Pedagogy-in-Participation which is effective in the promotion of respect for diversity in the early years (Oliveira-Formosinho & Barros Araújo, 2011). In this approach, accepting and acknowledging diversity within pre-kindergarten classrooms was found to be closely related to environments that are emotionally supportive of young children (Sanders & Downer, 2012).

There is a wide range of intended outcomes expressed across diversity education goals. In a review carried out by (Swain, 2012), the goals identified at primary level of education include: diversity awareness and understanding; interpersonal/Intercultural skills; diverse community: equal access and treatment; and organizational community and culture. At secondary level, wider goals were identified and included: student personal identity formation; dominant and alternative disciplinary paradigms; learning; power, inequality, and social construction; student action: addressing social change; student action: cultural development or societal success. In addition, human rights education has moved from the teacher-student perspective to a learner-teacher perspective and is thus taught and learned through a bottom-up approach in which the needs and interests of learners and target groups are part of the training concept (Mihr, 2009) which is being implemented.

### **3.6 School activities in promoting diversity and mainstreaming**

There were many initiatives by different organisations to promote curricular material promoting diversity, equality and fighting discrimination. These activities were developed by different organisations, mainly international NGOs such as the Council of Europe (2008a), Equitas (2008), Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR, 2013), the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (2012); Amnesty International (2010) etc., as well as national NGOs e.g. Learning Seed (2005) and REX Foundation (2009) in the US, First Nations Education Steering Committee (Wong, 2002) in Canada and other joint efforts in putting together examples of good practice (Council of Europe, OSCE/ODIHR, UNESCO, OHCHR,

2009). Educational materials were developed by the United Nations (2012) for students in compulsory schooling for teachers across the world as they look for resources and contexts when preparing lessons, as well as to provide advice on what actions can be taken at government level.

Teachers acknowledge that a good way of understanding diversity is through actual teaching experience as it requires continual reflection. Teacher education in Malta does include aspects related to equality and diversity in their pre-service teacher-training programme. There is, however, also a need to include training on equality issues and discrimination within pre-service as well as in-service training of teachers as they play an important role in the education of future generations. Issues which still need to be tackled include teacher capacity, stereotyping in the curriculum and school cultures which are not always open to diversity<sup>3</sup>. This highlights the importance of teacher training on how to teach in diverse settings and to manage issues of discrimination and harassment. As Crowley (2012) argues, there is also the need for school materials that enable pupils to be self-conscious about their own personal identity, and to also equip them with the skills to combat discrimination if/when this occurs and to establish mainstreaming of diversity and equality. It has been shown that when teachers are made aware and given support to deal with diversity, they are more open to diversity themselves as well as include more aspects related to diversity in their lessons (Lin & Bates, 2010). Training for teachers should thus involve the teaching of concepts alongside of fieldwork experiences (Seungyoun & Dallmann, 2008). Although the importance of preparing teachers for diversity has been well established in the literature, a decade ago pre-service teachers received a cursory amount of preparation for teaching towards diversity (Fuller, 1994). There have since been developments with teach education text books developed for the purpose of training teachers (Adam, Bell & Griffin, 2007; Ball & Tyson, 2011; Cruz, Ellenbroch, Vasquez & Howes, 2014). This reflects a greater attention being given to the need to train teachers with respect to equality and diversity. Teachers will surely benefit from a process of self-examination that seeks to understand one's conceptions of diversity. Additionally, teachers must understand how their

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<sup>3</sup> The key expert is a member of staff of the Faculty of Education, University of Malta and has expertise in teacher training and this is the experience from running the current B.Ed Degree Courses.

school conceptualises and addresses diversity (Angus & Oliveira, 2012). Materials to help educators evaluate training for teachers have also been developed. The joint effort by EQUITAS and the United Nations (Equitas & United Nations, 2011) is but one example.

#### **4.0 Main Pedagogical Approach**

The literature review has provided an overview of work done and research related to developing pedagogies which are effective in educating students within compulsory education with respect to equality and in accepting diversity. The understanding obtained through research on the best ways to educate for equality and combat discrimination, as well as a review of the pedagogies that have been utilised elsewhere with success have been used to develop the main pedagogical framework for the activities developed within this pilot study.

The pilot study involves the development and trial of four activities, 2 at primary and 2 at secondary level. These activities need to be embedded within the current subject curricula to test how possible it is to mainstream equality within the education system within compulsory age. These four activities (one for years 1-3, one for years 4-6 at primary level, and one at Form 2 and one at Form 4 secondary level) have been designed as the outcomes of partnership between the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE) and schools. The pedagogical framework to be used is based on similar approaches adopted in Human Rights education such as in work by Amnesty International (Amnesty International, 2010) and the Council of Europe (1995) among others. The activities tackle issues also highlighted by the Council of Europe (2008), UNESCO, (2007) and the European Commission (2007) with respect to globalisation, diversity and the need to promote intercultural competence in order to have a more equitable society. Work on intercultural competence (Pestalozzi Programme, 2012) developed by the Pestalozzi programme of the Council of Europe was also consulted and used to develop the educational approaches in these activities.

The activities designed target aspects of the aims set by NCPE, depending on the age and level of the students involved. However, the main pedagogical strategy which is applied across all activities is one which is participatory and collaborative in approach, starting from the learners' knowledge, feelings and personal experience. The role of the teacher as a role model and facilitator is considered essential to the success of the activities (Wong, 2002). The activities create situations which help students become more aware of their culture and respect differences which are the result of different cultures, religious beliefs, ethnic background, nationality, social background, disability etc. and to appreciate diversity and celebrate it rather than use it to discriminate against individuals and groups. Besides testing the potential to mainstream equality education within the current curriculum, one objective of the pilot study is to help students empathise with and give value to people who are different in order to build a better and fairer world and to take positive steps to reduce discrimination (Makonnen, 2006).

The activities need to work on the students' attitudes, feelings, perceptions, values and experiences. This cannot be achieved through a transmission approach to learning, but requires an experiential approach (NCCA, 2004). The process of learning is crucial and the most important aspect to achieving attitude changes. Although in this case only one activity is being piloted with each class, the main aim is to study the possibility of having such types of activities embedded within the national curriculum rather than achieving an attitudinal change. The latter needs sustained action and education over a longer period of time.

The pilot study involves the mainstreaming of equality into the curriculum. For this purpose it was important to identify different areas of the curriculum where it is possible to include issues related to equality, diversity and combating discrimination. It was thus important to pilot activities at different levels within the compulsory education system as well as to achieve this in a range of different subject areas.

The subject areas chosen for mainstreaming equality and diversity within the curriculum included Maltese/Social Studies/Religion for the Year 1-3 age group; Maltese/English/Social

Studies for the Year 4 primary group, English comprehension in Forms 1-2 level and Personal and Social Development (PSD) for Forms 3-5. These were selected mainly because the resources and activities developed fitted in best within these subject areas. The key pedagogical factors used for the development of these activities are based on the approach developed in work supported by the OSCE (2012), Council of Europe (2008, 1995) and which cut across all the four activities. The aspects involve the following:

- ***Participatory approach:*** In a participatory approach it is important that the atmosphere created in the class is one where children feel safe and are able to talk freely. Cooperation, respect, fairness, inclusion, respect for diversity, responsibility and acceptance are the attitudes being promoted and consequently these are the principles with which the activity will be implemented in the classroom;
- ***Learning process is based on the approach: feel, think, act*** (Council of Europe, 2008a; Equitas, 2008). The students express opinions and experiences about the situation/game/role play; Think involves reflection on our behaviour during the game/situation and other contexts with respect to diversity issues; and act refers to how we can include these feelings and opinions such that they can be incorporated in the way we behave in our everyday life.

The structure below is the framework within which the activities are built:

- ***Initial Ice breaker:*** Although the students in the class know each other well, it is important to create an environment where group dynamics is based on mutual respect and co-operation. The ice breaker thus sets good group dynamics in the class for the activities which are to follow. Where possible, the ice breaker also provides the context for tackling the issue related to diversity through knowing our friends better;

- ***Active participation in learning situation created:*** Through the use of group work involving a collaborative approach, students consider situations which they experience, act out, read about in order to experience feelings about the situation, reflect on them based on the discussions with peers, and possibly also consider potential positive action/behaviour which they can take. The process involves the direct involvement of the learners. This aspect of the methodology is important as the learning process where children learn needs to reflect the principles which are being promoted if effective learning is to take place.
- ***Debriefing and evaluation:*** Discussion is central to the education process. All activities are to end with a short discussion which involves a debriefing and an evaluation of the activity with the learners. The aim of this exercise is to review the main issues which were raised during the activity and to then use these to emphasise issues related to the objectives of the lesson.

Since the activities need to be embedded as much as possible in a subject area in the curriculum in order for the concepts to be mainstreamed, the structure above needs to be adapted to the subject area targeted. However, they are still to include all the elements identified.

The following are the four activities designed (refer to Annex 1):

1. Years 1-3 at primary level – Respecting differences: In this activity children are helped to become positively aware of the differences amongst them and to learn to accept diversity as a positive thing which should be celebrated. This is mainstreamed a literacy activity;
2. Year 4-6 at primary level – Stereotypes: In this activity children are helped to realise that we should not judge people by first impressions and that often stereotypes lead us to consider people in a different way to how they really are. The main message is that we

need to know people and not judge them by their appearance. This is mainstreamed in a Maltese writing activity;

3. Form 1-2 at secondary level – Diversity and aspects of mainstreaming. This activity forms part of an English Comprehension exercise which presents a text where students are asked to reflect on diversity and how mainstreaming requires that one considers diversity when planning, in this case housing. The text is entitled ‘Building a house for diversity: the Elephant and the Giraffe’ (Roosevelt & Woodruff, 2010);

Form 3-5 at secondary level – Discrimination: This activity can be mainstreamed within PSD. Students are asked to share experiences and knowledge about discrimination. This creates a context to introduce the grounds of discrimination. Positive action to combat discrimination is also discussed.

Mr Niall Crowley, who is an expert in equality and diversity, was assigned as an independent reviewer to review the testing material. Appendix I includes a letter with his comments endorsing the quality of the material.

## **5.0 Methodology of the Evaluation**

This section includes the description of the tools used to probe the participants’ knowledge and understanding of the equality, diversity, mainstreaming and related issues before the activity and then the impact of the lesson on their views. The participants in this study included primary and secondary students, teachers, and their parent/guardians.

### **5.1 The evaluation tools**

The evaluation tools used to evaluate the impact of the pedagogical materials in this pilot study included (refer to Annexes 4 -6):

- Pre-activity questionnaire for primary level students;
- Pre-activity questionnaire for secondary students;
- Pre-activity questionnaire for parent/guardians;
- Post activity questionnaire for primary students;
- Post-activity questionnaire for secondary students;
- Post-activity questionnaire for parent/guardians;
- Post-activity interview with the teachers;
- Activity observation; and
- Post-activity parent/guardians' focus groups.

The aims and objectives of each of these tools and the type of information that they gathered are described in the sub-sections which follow.

### 5.1.1 Pre-activity questionnaire for primary students

A questionnaire was designed to obtain a measure of students' understanding related to issues concerning equality, diversity and mainstreaming before the activity. The questionnaire also aimed to capture the students' experience of learning about these issues. Due to the respondents' young age, it was decided to design the questionnaire in a user-friendly format including the use of smiley faces (one face sad, one neutral face, and one happy face). In one instance, the smiley faces represented: a little, so and so; and many. In a second instance they were used to depict: disagree; do not know; and agree. After indicating their gender the primary students were asked to indicate how much they knew about the following aspects: equality between men and women; different religions in the world; equality among people of different cultures; when people are treated differently due to their age; and the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality. The children were then presented with a number of statements and they had to indicate if they disagreed, did not know, or agreed. The statements presented different situations related to the various grounds of discrimination. Examples of statements presented are presented here below:

*Immigrants are people like us and we should respect them.*

*I still make friends with children of different cultures.*

***I do not mind to places where there are also people who are over 65 years old.***

Finally, the children are asked to indicate if they have ever before had lessons related to different religions, cultures, men and women, and also people of different ages. The actual questionnaire is provided in Annex 4 at the end of this document.

### **5.1.2 Pre-activity questionnaire for secondary students**

The pre-activity questionnaire for secondary students was a questionnaire as there was no particular need to facilitate understanding. Otherwise, the questions set to students were more or less the same as those asked to the primary students. The questionnaire thus started with asking the students to indicate how much they feel that they know with respect to: equality among people; equality among men and women specifically; equality among people of different cultures; among people of different religions; how people can be discriminated against; and the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality. Then, they were also presented with a number of statements and asked to indicate, this time on a five-point scale how much they disagree/agree. Examples of statements used include:

***At school I do not like to have friends of different Religion.***

***It is a good thing to learn about different Religions so that you can understand others better.***

***Men tend to be better than women at work.***

In the last part of the questionnaire, the students were asked to indicate whether they had had before lessons related to different aspects related to equality: different religions; different cultures; different genders; people of different ages; and of different sexual orientation.

The questionnaire used with the secondary students at pre-activity level can be found in Annex 4 at the end of this document.

### **5.1.3 Pre-activity questionnaire for parent/guardians**

A pre-activity questionnaire was also distributed to students to take home and ask their parent/guardians to fill in. The aim of this questionnaire was to obtain some insight into the

background knowledge and attitudes of the parent/guardians' with respect to equality, diversity and mainstreaming, and whether they ever engage in discussions with their children about these issues.

In the first section of the questionnaire the parent/guardians were asked to indicate their relation to the student and also some information about them such as their highest level of education. Like the students, they were also asked to indicate how much knowledge they possess with respect to: equality among people; equality among men and women specifically; equality among people of different cultures; among people of different religions; how people can be discriminated against; and the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality.

Like the students, parent/guardians were also presented with the same statements as those used with the students. Like the secondary students, the parent/guardians were requested to rate how much they agree or disagree with these statements.

At the end of the questionnaire, the parent/guardians were asked to indicate whether and how much they ever talked about issues related to equality issues with respect to: different religions; different cultures; different genders; people of different ages; and of different sexual orientation.

#### **5.1.4 Post-activity questionnaire for primary students**

The students were given another questionnaire following the completion of the activity. This questionnaire aimed at obtaining some feedback on how much and what the students learned in the activity.

As in the pre-activity questionnaire, the primary children were again presented with the smiley faces. In this case, they had to indicate how much they enjoyed the lesson overall, the game at the beginning of the activity, discussing with their classmates, and expressing their opinion with their classmates.

They were then asked to indicate how much they felt that they learnt about: respecting people of different religions; different ages; different cultures; how not to act differently with men and women; how to hear what others have to say; how not to judge people; how to accept different opinion; how to meet different people; and how to identify instances of discrimination.

At the end of the questionnaire the students were asked to indicate if they would like to have more lessons like the one they had and how much they felt that they learned overall. The questionnaire used is given in Annex 5 at the end of this document.

### **5.1.5 Post-activity questionnaire for secondary students**

A post-activity questionnaire was used also with the secondary students. In this questionnaire, like the primary students, they were asked to indicate how much they enjoyed the lesson, as well as the separate activities such as the ice breaker, the discussion held, and the opportunity to share their opinions with their classmates.

In the next part of the questionnaire, they were also asked to indicate how much they have learned with respect to respecting people of different religions; different ages; different cultures; how not to act differently with men and women; how to hear what others have to say; how not to judge people; how to accept different opinion; how to meet different people; and how to identify instances of discrimination. They were then asked to also indicate how much they learned with respect to equality between people of different religions, gender, age, cultures and sexual orientation. They were also asked about their knowledge on the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality.

Finally, at the end, the students were asked whether they have learned about what to do what faced with and/or experiencing discrimination, and whether they would like to have more lessons similar to the one that they had experienced.

The questionnaire used is given in Annex 5 at the end of this document.

### **5.1.6 Post activity interview with teachers**

The teacher's opinion was considered very important in obtaining a view of how relevant and effective the lesson was, and to understand the potential that lessons which integrate educating about equality issues have with specific subject matter.

The specific questions thus first asked the teachers to reflect on how well and how effective they thought that the lesson was and whether they felt that the lesson worked well. They were then asked to indicate if they would use the lesson again in the future and to reflect and share on how

much the feel and believe that it is possible to have more lessons which integrate teaching about issues related to equality, gender mainstreaming and diversity, and subject knowledge at the same time.

At the end of the interview, the teachers were asked to share their opinion about what type of support and training would teachers need in order to include more such lessons in their work as well as what type of initiatives NCPE can take in order to support teachers in their work. The interview questions set to the teachers are provided in Annex 5 at the end of this document.

### **5.1.7 Post-activity questionnaire for parent/guardians**

A questionnaire was also done with the parent/guardians of the students. This was a very short questionnaire and asked parent/guardians a few questions about whether their children had talked about the activity with them. These questions were set to probe whether anything that was done at school was discussed at home in view of the potential of educating the parent/guardians through their children.

The parent/guardians were then asked to indicate whether they had agreed with their children having such type of lessons and whether they agreed that this would be beneficial for their education.

The questionnaire used is provided in Annex 5 at the end of this document.

### **5.1.8 Post-activity focus group interview**

The last tool used was a focus group with parent/guardians after the activity in two of the lessons. The aim of this focus group was to asked parent/guardians if their children had talked about the activity and whether the effect they think that the lesson has had on the children.

The parent/guardians' then are to be given a short description of the lesson and asked whether they liked the activities and whether they believe that they support the idea that children are thought about these issues with their children. They were then asked to share their opinion about the approach of integrating teaching about issues on equality, diversity and mainstreaming within subject areas.

The interview questions used are provided in Annex 5 at the end of this document.

## 5.2 Data collection

These tools were prepared to be implemented before and after the teaching activity. The overall data collection included the parent/guardians and students filling in the pre-activity questionnaires. The lesson activity will then be delivered with the researcher observing the activity. After the activity, the parent/guardians and students fill in another questionnaire. In addition all the teachers are interviewed about the activity. In two of the cases, a focus group with parent/guardians was also included.

A call for interest was issued for schools by the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality. A number of schools responded to the expression of interest to trial activities promoting equality, diversity and mainstreaming. From these schools, the four schools were selected. They were contacted and an explanation of the aims and objectives of the pilot study were provided. The schools were asked if they could find teachers who would be willing to trial the activities.

This first activity (Respective Differences – Diversity) was implemented in Year 1 class in Zejtun A primary school with 18 five to six year old students (11 females and 7 males) and 14 parents/guardians taking part in the pre-study and 17 students (10 females and 7 males) and 11 parents/guardians taking part in the post-study.

Activity 2 (Stereotypes) was implemented in a Year 4 class in Zabbar B Primary school with 17 students aged 9 to 10 years (8 females and 9 males) and 13 parents/guardians taking part in both the pre-study and post-study.

The third activity (Building a House for Diversity – The Giraffe and the Elephant) was implemented in two Form 2 classes – St Albert the Great Boys’ Secondary School and the St Ignatius Girls’ Secondary School. 20 male students and 11 of their parents/guardians and 19 female students participated and 20 parents/guardians took part in the pre-activity. The post-activity was carried out by 20 male students but only 4 of their parents/guardians and 20 female students and 19 of their parents/guardians.

Activity 4 (Discrimination) was carried out in a Form 4 class from St Albert the Great School with 9 male students and 6 of their parents/guardians participating in the pre-activity and 9 males students participating in the post-activity (with none of their parents taking part in this).

Before any trials were made, official permission from the Catholic Diocese in the case of the Church Schools, and from the Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education (DQSE) in the case of State schools was obtained. This permission was obtained on the basis of consent forms signed by the relevant Heads of School and teachers involved in the piloting exercise (refer to Annex 3).

After obtaining permission, the researcher visited the schools to explain the process as well as to provide the preparation and training of the teachers participating. Due to the difficulty in getting the teachers available all at the same time, the researcher has visited the school at adequate times in order to be able to spend time with the teachers when they were available at school. The teacher training was thus conducted separately with each teacher involved.

Prior to the implementation of each activity, the researcher collected questionnaires from the students as well as distributed questionnaires for the parent/guardians to fill in. The activity was then implemented. The researcher acted as a non-participant observer where field notes of the activity reflecting the teacher's actions and the children's reactions and participation were taken. After the activity, a post-activity interview was carried out with the teacher about the success and impact of the activity. Post-activity questionnaires were also distributed among the students for them to fill in and one for their parent/guardians. In the two primary schools, five parent/guardians were invited to attend school the following day for a focus group interview about the activity.

The data collected from the questionnaires was inputted in an excel sheet and imported into SPSS so that data collected could be analysed.

### **5.3 Ethical considerations**

Permissions from the official organisations: the Catholic Diocese; and the Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education (DQSE) were obtained. Consent forms were also obtained from the head of the Schools involved and the teachers who were to implement the activities. In addition, an information sheet and a consent form was distributed to the parent/guardians, even if at no point were the personal details of the children taken and all the evaluation tools used were anonymous (refer to Annex 3). Consent forms were also used for the focus groups.

All these ethical considerations ensure that at no point will the identities of the participants in the pilot study disclosed at any point.

## 6.0 Evaluation of the Activity Trials

This section includes the analysis of the data collected during the evaluation exercise. It includes the analyses of the pre- and post- data collection evaluation tools. For clarity, each and every activity will be described one after the other in turn.

### 6.1 Evaluation of Activity 1

This first activity was implemented in a Year 1 class in a primary State School. The teacher was trained by the researcher prior to the activity. She was also willing to implement activities which treat issues related to equality and diversity due to the increasing diversity which Maltese society is experiencing. The teacher involved feels that this changing society brings with it a greater need to prepare future generations to be tolerant and accept diversity such that real inclusion can be achieved. The activity was thus to be implemented by a professional who already held positive attitudes toward promoting principles and attitudes related to equality and diversity, promoting mainstreaming.

#### 6.1.1 Pre-activity perceptions and understanding for the Year 1 class

A total of 18 students participated in activity 1 which was implemented in a year 1 class. Out of these students, 11 were girls and 7 were boys.

##### *The children's perceptions*

Prior to the activity, the Year 1 children were asked to indicate how much they knew about different aspects related to equality. The primary children had to indicate between three levels of knowledge: '*a little*', '*so and so*', and '*a lot*'. These were ranked from 1-3 where 1 refers to 'little' and 3 represents 'a lot'. The average rating obtained for the year 1 students are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1: Means obtained from students for level of knowledge**

**Knowledge Level: 1 – a little; 2 – so and so; 3 – a lot**

<b>Level of knowledge related to:</b>	<b>Children's Mean</b>
Equality between men and women	2.44
Different religions that there are across the world	1.19
Equality between people of different cultures and different nationalities	1.88
When people are treated badly because they are from different countries and/or different religions.	1.47
When people are treated differently according to their age.	1.33
The National Commission for the Promotion of Equality	1.00

It can be noted that the children declared that they were most knowledgeable with respect to equality between men and women, as well as in the case of equality between people of different cultures and nationalities. The children were least knowledgeable with respect to the knowledge of the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality, and people of different religions. None of the children had heard about the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (MCPE). This is understandable as the children are only 5 years old and so their experience of the world is limited. Possibly, in the case of religion, children may not have been exposed to people of diverse religions.

The children's claims in this first question were then compared to the responses that they gave to a number of statements which followed. The responses obtained in Table 2 give a better indication of what the children believe is acceptable or otherwise. In this case, the children were also asked to indicate their response on a three-point scale – 'disagree', 'don't know' and 'agree'. The means for the statements provided are given in the table overleaf.

When one looks at the means obtained, it can be seen that the students like to make friends with everybody, even with children who are not Maltese. They also believe that immigrants need to be respected and are against not being friends with children because they are of different religion. They also do not mind going to places where there are people of 65 years or older around. However, they are in favour of the mother staying at home to take care of the children and do not like very much the idea that men can stay at home instead. They also are not in favour of people over the age of 65 keeping on working if they wish.

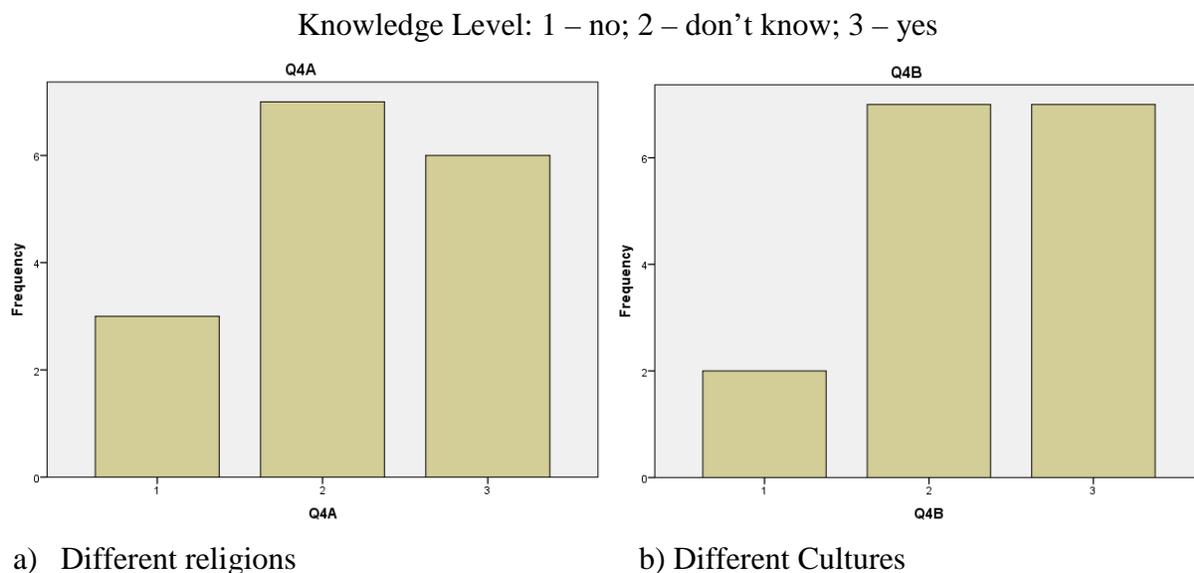
**Table 2: Children's response to statements presented to the children**  
**Knowledge Level: 1 – do not agree; 2 – don't know; 3 – agree**

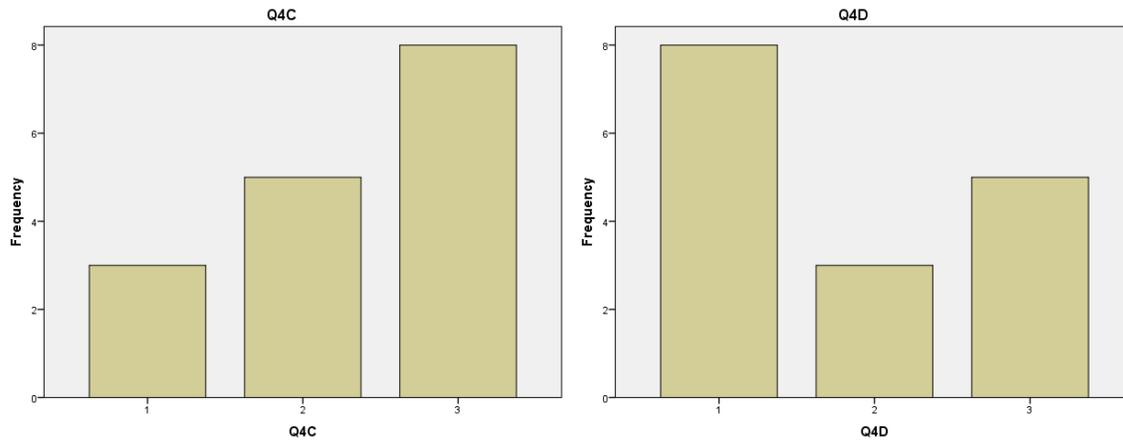
Level of knowledge related to:	Children's Mean
At school I like to make friends with everybody, even those who are not Maltese.	3.00
A woman can stay at home and not go to work to take care of the children.	3.00
Immigrants are people like us and we should respect them.	2.81
I still make friends with children who are of different cultures.	2.91
I do not mind going out to places where people over the age of 65 are present.	2.44
I prefer not to have friends of different religion to mine.	1.81
A woman cannot work as a builder.	2.31
A man can stay at home to take care of the children while the mother goes to work.	1.56
It is good to learn about other religions as you can understand them better.	2.44

People of age 65 years or older can keep on working for as long as they wish.	1.69
There are some things at which girls are better than boys.	2.44
Both young people as well as people over 50 years can love their work with the same passion.	1.77

The children were also asked *if they ever before had lessons related to different aspects of equality*. The graphs presented overleaf show that in all the four aspects: religion; culture; gender; and age that there are a number of students who do not know whether they have had lessons about these issues or not before. There is also a degree of disagreement on whether they had any lessons on these issues before. It can be seen that the largest number stating ‘no’ that they did not have any lessons was highest in the case of the topic of age. One must keep in mind how young these children are and so be careful in interpreting their responses, since they may not understand well what type of lessons the questions were referring to.

As seen from Figure 2, the responses obtained show that overall the children claim that they have positive attitudes related to tolerance, supporting equality in the case of gender, religion and different cultures. However, it could be noted that they still have demonstrated to hold stereotypic beliefs, mainly with respect to childcare and the old people in society.





c) About men and women

d) people of different ages

**Figure 2: Distribution of responses related to prior lessons related to different aspects of equality**

*The Parent/guardians' perceptions*

14 parent/guardians out of the total of the 18 students in the class filled in the questionnaire. The table below provide a short description of the educational profile of the parent/guardians filling in the questionnaire. In all the cases, the mother filled in the questionnaire. As can be seen in Table 3, the majority of the parent/guardians/ have up to secondary level of education. Only two parent/guardians had post secondary education.

**Table 3: Parent/guardians' level of education**

Highest Level of Education	No.
Primarja	1
Sekondarja	9
Trade School	2
Secondary (Vocational)	0
Junior College jew simili	1
Universita'	1

The parent/guardians/guardians were asked similar questions to the children, being asked to indicate how much they knew about different aspects related to equality and diversity. In the case of the parent/guardians, unlike the 3-point scale, a five-point likert scale was used instead. The

range of responses possible ranged from ‘no knowledge’ (awarded – 1) to ‘a lot’ (awarded - 5). Table 4 gives the mean obtained for the ratings given.

It can be noted that the parent/guardians provided overall positive average with values greater than 2.5 which is in the neutral position. In fact, most of the ratings were over the value of 3. It was only in the case of the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE) that the parent/guardians seemed to have limited knowledge. This reflects the lack of familiarity of these parent/guardians with NCPE and its role in society.

**Table 4: Average of the ratings given by parent/guardians with respect to amount of knowledge**

**Knowledge Level: nothing; 2 – a little; 3 – so and so; 4 – quite; 5 – a lot**

<b>Level of knowledge related to:</b>	<b>Children’s Mean</b>
Equality between men and women	3.64
Different religions that there are across the world	3.85
Equality between people of different cultures and different nationalities	3.5
When people are treated badly because they are from different countries and/or different religions.	3.29
When people are treated differently according to their age.	3.36
The National Commission for the Promotion of Equality	1.86

The parent/guardians expressed similar positive attitudes like the children. They are in favour that children are friends with everybody, that immigrants are people too and should be respected, that it is good to learn about other religions. Unlike the children, they agree that men can stay at

home to take care of the children while the mother works. However, even if not as much as the children, they believe that women should stay at home to take care of the children. Unlike children, they do mind it if they go out to places where there are people who are over the age of 65. But they are against boys and girls being better at different things. This shows that there are slight differences in the beliefs and attitudes between the children and their parent/guardians, even if these are with respect to few aspects.

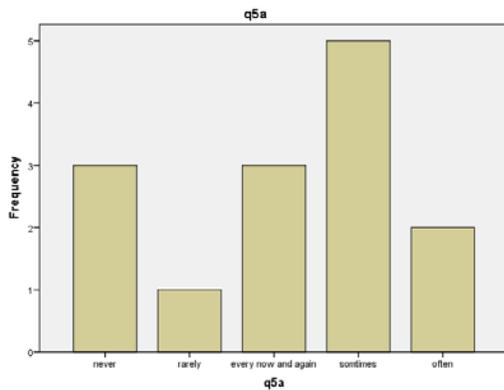
**Table 5: Parent/guardians of Year 1 children response to statements presented  
Level: 1- Strongly disagree; 2 – Disagree; 3 – Normal; 4 – Agree; 5 - Strongly agree**

<b>Level of knowledge related to:</b>	<b>Children's Mean</b>
At school I like children to be friends with everybody, even those who are not Maltese.	4.64
A woman can stay at home and not go to work to take care of the children.	3.15
Immigrants are people like us and we should respect them.	4.14
I still make friends with children who are of different cultures.	4.00
I do not mind going out to places where people over the age of 65 are present.	2.14
I prefer not to have friends of different religion to mine.	2.14
A woman cannot work as a builder.	2.86
A man can stay at home to take care of the children while the mother goes to work.	3.57
It is good to learn about other religions as you can understand them better.	3.64

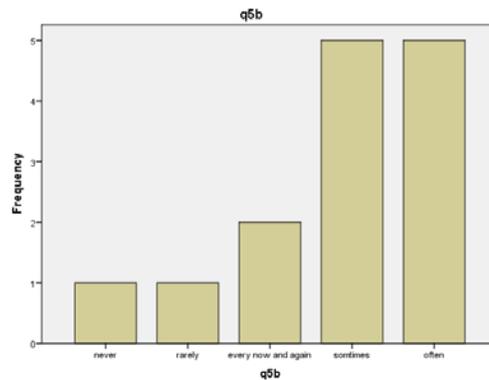
People of age 65 years or older can keep on working for as long as they wish.	3.57
There are some things at which girls are better than boys.	2.21
Both young people as well as people over 50 years can love their work with the same passion.	3.64

The parent/guardians were at the end of the questionnaire asked on whether they even spoke to their children about different aspects related to equality, diversity and mainstreaming. Figure 3 overleaf show the responses obtained. The distribution of responses show that the main themes which parent/guardians seem to speak to their children more often relates to different nationalities and to a lesser extent about gender equality. Otherwise, there is no preference or tendency to talk to children about aspects related to different religions, cultures and discrimination against people. These responses must be interpreted taking into consideration that their children are only 5-6 years old and so often parent/guardians do not tend to tackle certain issues which they may consider difficult for the children to understand or irrelevant to them.

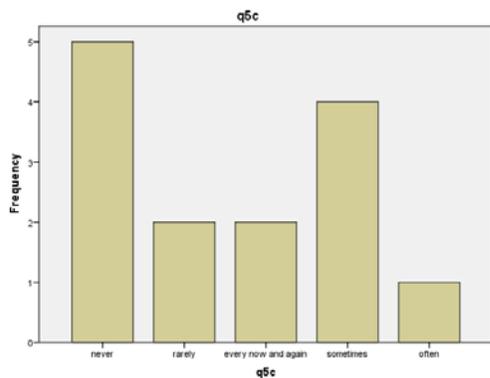
Level: 1- never; 2 – rarely; 3 – every now and again; 4 – sometimes; 5 - often



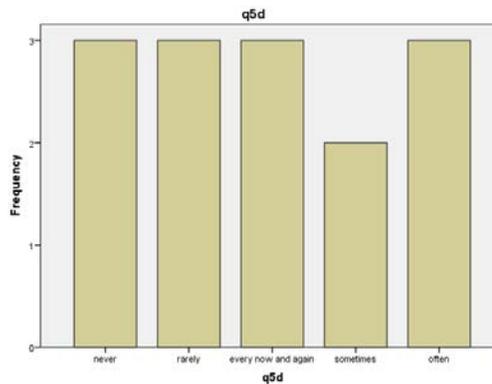
a) Gender Equality



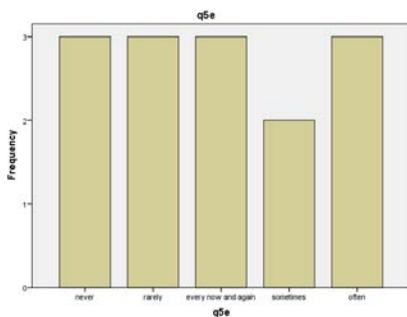
b) Different Nationalities



c) Different Religions



d) different cultures



E) Discrimination against people

**Figure 3: Parent/guardians' frequency with which they talk to their children about different issues**

### 6.1.2 Narrative of the implementation of Activity 1

Having obtained a snapshot of the students' and their parent/guardians' views, the lesson narrative is considered. The teacher decided to carry out the activity in the yard. She first stuck a coloured sticker on the shirt of each child in the class. There were a total of 18 children present on the day. The teacher made sure that there were three colours used for the stickers so that they could form 3 groups of 6 where only two of the children had the same colour. Once the children had the sticker, the teacher prepared three cones and explained what they had to do. At first the children struggled to understand the rules of the game, and that they only needed to be two of a certain sticker colour. The children played the game three times.

The teacher then introduced the main lesson activity: the game of Venus and Saturn. The teacher organised two cones. She then explained the activity to the children. She asked them to decide which of two options they preferred. Each time they had to decide which cone – Saturn or Venus

to go to. The examples used included choosing between: favourite colour between blue and green; pizza or spaghetti; skirt or trousers; dogs or cats and other similar examples.

After the activity the teacher invited the children to sit down in the play area and she then asked them about what they had noticed about the game. The children immediately noted that some preferred some examples in one instance, but then other examples in other instances. The teachers asked the children to reflect on whether they were the same or different – they said that they were different. The teacher asked them if they were friends, and the children said a chorus ‘Yes’. The teacher asked them to think about what they had learnt in the lesson and there were various contributions. Some of the children could only give an explanation about the actual game that they played. But in one particular case, two children noted that they could still be friends even if they are different. The teacher then highlighted how sometimes they can meet children who are different, either in skin colour, religion, or in their way of living, and like they did in the game, they can still make friends. The children agreed and with this the lesson ended with the children going back to the classroom.

It can be noted that while all the children participated actively in the game - Venus and Saturn, not all were engaged at the same level in the activity afterwards. Some were not that interested or else it was too difficult for them to abstract the lesson learnt from the game to a higher level of understanding. However, it appeared as if the main message was well received by most of the children.

The lesson took around 45 minutes and the original lesson plan was followed.

### **6.1.3 Post- Activity review for Year 1**

This section considers the different forms of feedback obtained about the lesson after it was completed.

#### **The teacher’s interview**

The teacher appeared enthusiastic when she talked about the lesson and its outcomes. She felt that it went quite well and that she felt that a good number of the children had understood the main message. She feels that there needs to be more education about these aspects. She indicated that she tries to promote positive attitudes needed for a diverse society. However, she was not aware of the need to be non-intrusive as much as possible and that it is not desirable to use certain labels, even if to teach positive aspects. The teacher felt that she needed pedagogical

training with respect to how best to tackle these issues. She also stated that there is a need for more educational resources from which she could pick and choose and adapt to her students' needs. She also said that this probably applied also to other teachers. In fact she recommended that NCPE can contribute and offer support by working to produce more of such resources which can be used by teachers in schools and which are flexible enough to allow them to adapt according to the students' teaching needs.

### **Post-activity focus group**

A group of five parent/guardians attended the focus group. Out of these five parent/guardians, two children had described the activity to the parent/guardians in detail. Another two had mentioned the activity but with less detail. One child did not say anything to her parent/guardian. It has to be said across the board that the Venus and Saturn game had a great impact on the children as the parent/guardians recounted how the children all described what they did in this game in detail. Three of the parent/guardians mentioned how their children explained that they learned that although they are different, that they can still be friends. It was evident from the parent/guardians' anecdotes that in most cases the main message of the activity had been received and understood by the children. The parent/guardians expressed approval for the organisation of such activities. They thought that the game was a good idea and stressed how important it was for children to learn about these things due to more and more diversity in our society. One parent/guardian commented how she was not surprised at her daughter as they had a disabled person in the family and her daughter has no problem with it and in fact communicates with this person without any prejudice. The parent/guardians believed that there could be more lessons that tackle this issue and if it can be achieved through teaching subject matter it would be positive as learning would be made more relevant. They stressed how important it was for games to be used as these were relevant to the children and they could learn more and more effectively.

### **Pupils' post-activity questionnaire**

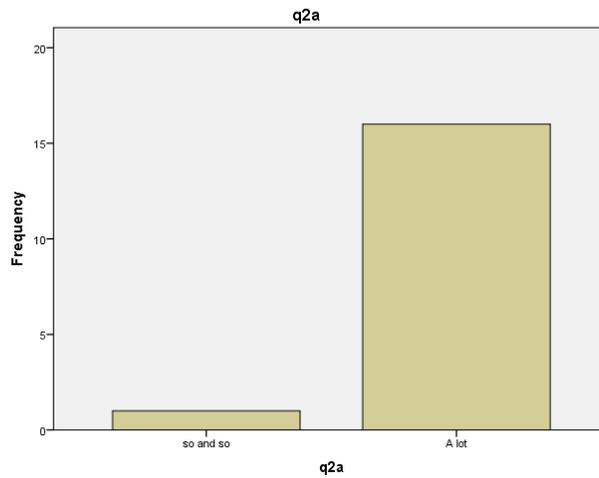
The children also completed questionnaires at the end of the activity. These questionnaires provided some insights into how much the children enjoyed the lesson and what impact it had on their experience.

### **Students post-activity questionnaire**

17 students filled in the post-activity questionnaire, of whom 7 were boys and the other 10 were girls.

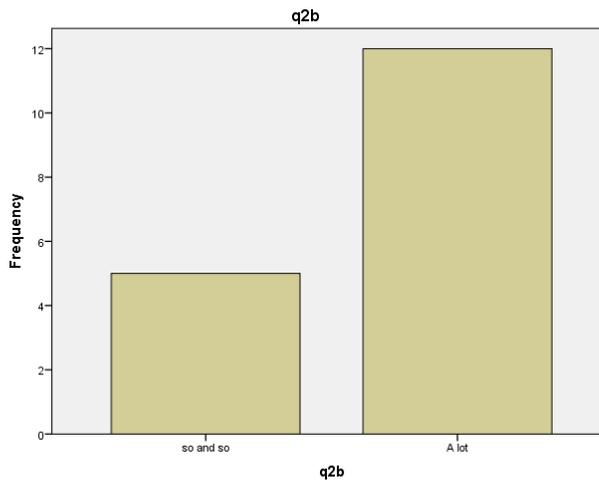
The students were asked to indicate how much they enjoyed the lesson. As shown from Figure 4, none of the students stated that they enjoyed themselves a little and the great majority said that they enjoyed it a lot.

Level: 1- a little; 2 – so and so; 3 – a lot



**Figure 4: Frequency of how much the children enjoyed the lesson overall**

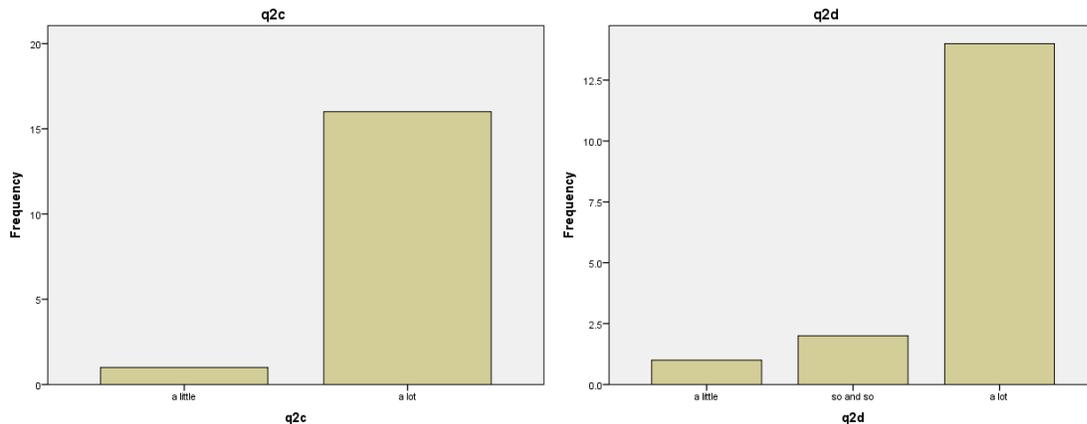
Level: 1- a little; 2 – so and so; 3 – a lot



**Figure 5: How much the children enjoyed the first game**

As seen from Figure 5, the children also specified that they enjoyed a lot the first game, even if some were evidently a little confused at the beginning until they understood how the game worked. None of the children said that they enjoyed themselves only a little.

Level: 1- a little; 2 – so and so; 3 – a lot



**Figure 6: Frequency of how much the children enjoyed a) discussing what you did with the other children and b) sharing their opinions with the other children.**

As seen from Figure 6, the children evidently enjoyed discussing with the other children as well as sharing their opinions. This reflects how much the children appreciate the activities organized during the lesson and that they enjoyed and learned from what they were involved in.

**Table 6: Students' statements on how much they learned with respect to different skills**

Statement	A little	So and so	A lot
How to respect people of different age	1	8	8
How to respect people of different religion	4	3	10
How to respect people of different culture	4	3	10
3Not to differentiate between men and women	2	2	12
To listen to the opinion of others	3	3	11
Not to judge people from how they look	4	4	10
To accept the opinion of others	1	2	14

Not to have problems meeting other people	1	1	15
Not to fight with your friends if you disagree with them	3	4	10
Know when somebody is treated unjustly	1	0	16

The children indicated across the board how they learned a number of different skills which increase their sensitivity related to equality. Table 6 shows that the aspect which was least positively rated was the one related to age difference. This is to be understood as this aspect was not really tackled during the activity. The skills which most children felt that they learned referred to not being afraid to meet people – which was tackled directly in this activity; to accept the opinion of others – another aspect which was tackled directly in the activity as the children became aware of the differences amongst them; and to know when people are treated unjustly – this last aspect in a way was related to the activity as the children discussed how they should still be friends with other children who were different and that it was not fair to just not want to make friends with some children because they like something else.

When the children were asked to indicate whether they would like to have more lessons like this, 16 out of the 17 respondents were very eager and positive. In the same way, when asked how much they had learnt during the lesson, 1 said ‘so and so’ while the remaining 16 indicated that they had learned ‘a lot’. These responses show how much the children enjoyed the lesson as well as how much they actually also learned and would like to learn more.

### Parent/guardians’ post-activity questionnaire

11 parent/guardians filled in and returned the questionnaire. Out of these 11, 7 of the parent/guardians stated that their children had spoken about the activity at home.

**Table 7: Parent/guardians’ responses about the children’s learning**

	Nothing	A little	So and So	Quite	A lot
Learning about equality	3	1	2	3	0
Learning about identifying discrimination	2	3	1	3	0
How much do you feel that children should learn about these things?	0	0	1	2	9

Table 7 reveals that when asked how much they believed that their children had learned about equality and about identifying discrimination, responses obtained varied and only three of the respondents felt that the children had learned a lot. Some felt that they had not really learned much. However, this must be seen in the context of the children's age and that these concepts were not actually tackled directly and so both the parent/guardians and the children may not have identified the link between the lesson and the learning taking place.

On the other hand, when asked how much they feel that children should learn about these issues, the parent/guardians were very positive and think that they are very important things that should be included in the curriculum. In fact, all the respondents agreed that these aspects should be included in the curriculum and that they should be learned integrated with other subjects.

#### **6.1.4 Overall evaluation of Activity 1**

The different data collected both the evaluation of this study indicate that the children enjoyed the lesson and that the main message was received by most of the children. The children also enjoyed themselves during the activity and felt that they had learned a lot. They also tended to talk to their parent/guardians and in some cases they could articulate the main message of what was learnt. The teacher was overall satisfied with the activity and realised how the non-intrusive approach still led the children to understand issues related to equality and diversity. She felt that she needed access to more resources and that she would appreciate having more such type of resources to adapt to her class. The parent/guardians overall held a positive approach and attitude to the activities and liked the idea that children are educated on equality issues in view of the changing reality that our society is facing. They wanted to see that their children possess the positive attitudes and tolerance that one should have in a multicultural and inclusive society.

#### **6.2 Evaluation of Activity 2**

This second activity was implemented with a Year 4 primary class in State Primary School. The teacher was trained and the main issues to be tackled reviewed. It was felt important to highlight to the teacher the importance to take a non-intrusive approach to tackling these issues and that one needs to talk about them in a sensitive way.

##### **6.2.1 Pre-activity perceptions and understanding for the Year 4 class**

As in the case of Activity 1, the students' and teachers' perspective with respect to equality, diversity and mainstreaming was taken. These perceptions are analysed and described below.

### The students' perspective

17 students filled in the pre-activity questionnaire, of whom 8 were girls and the remaining 9 were boys. They were asked to indicate how much they felt that they knew about different aspects. The students were asked to rate how much they knew on a three-point scale: 'a little - 1', 'so and so - 2' and 'a lot - 3'.

**Table 8: Means obtained from students for level of knowledge**

**Knowledge level: 1 - a little; 2 – so and so; 3 - a lot**

Level of knowledge related to:	Children's Mean
Equality between men and women	1.64
Different religions that there are across the world	1.43
Equality between people of different cultures and different nationalities	2.43
When people are treated badly because they are from different countries and/or different religions.	2.36
When people are treated differently according to their age.	2.57
The National Commission for the Promotion of Equality	1.35

These students indicated that they were most knowledgeable with respect to equality between people of different cultures and when people are treated differently due to being from different countries and/or religions. They were a little less knowledgeable with respect to equality between men and women; and different religions across the world, even if the average was between 'so and so' and 'a lot'.

The children were also presented with a number of statements and asked to rate how much they disagreed (1) to agreed (3) on a three-point likert scale. From the means of the ratings obtained in Table 9 it can be said that the students like to make friends with other children, even if they are of different nationalities, that immigrants should be respected as they are also people; the need to learn about other different religions; to go out to places where there are older people present; and that older people can still be enthusiastic about their work.

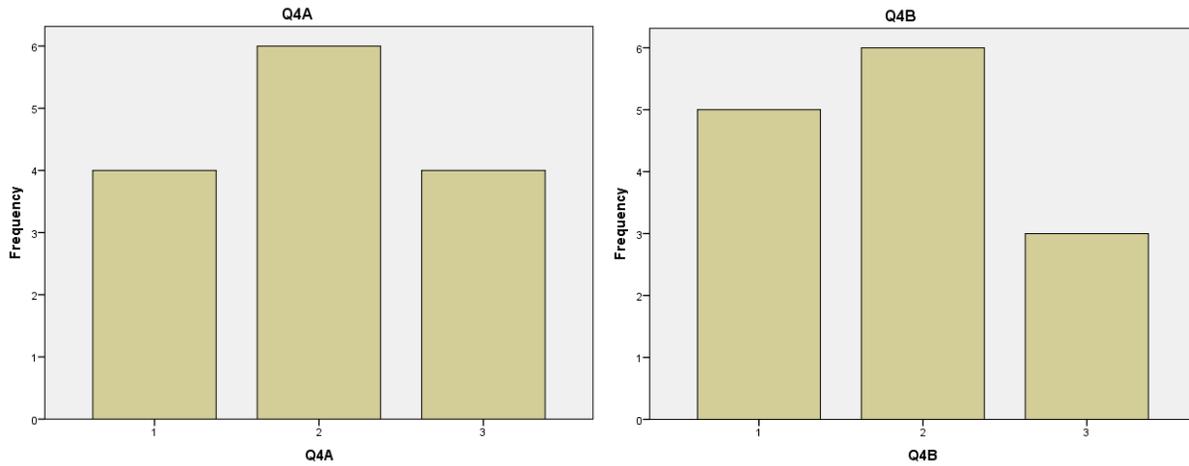
**Table 9: Children's response to statements presented to the children**

Level: 1 - do not agree; 2 - don't know; 3 - agree

Level of knowledge related to:	Children's Mean
At school I like to make friends with everybody, even those who are not Maltese.	2.93
A woman can stay at home and not go to work to take care of the children.	1.50
Immigrants are people like us and we should respect them.	2.86
I still make friends with children who are of different cultures.	2.93
I do not mind going out to places where people over the age of 65 are present.	2.29
I prefer not to have friends of different religion to mine.	1.93
A woman cannot work as a builder.	1.64
A man can stay at home to take care of the children while the mother goes to work.	1.71
It is good to learn about other religions as you can understand them better.	2.57
People of age 65 years or older can keep on working for as long as they wish.	1.86
There are some things at which girls are better than boys.	1.93
Both young people as well as people over 50 years can love their work with the same passion.	2.57

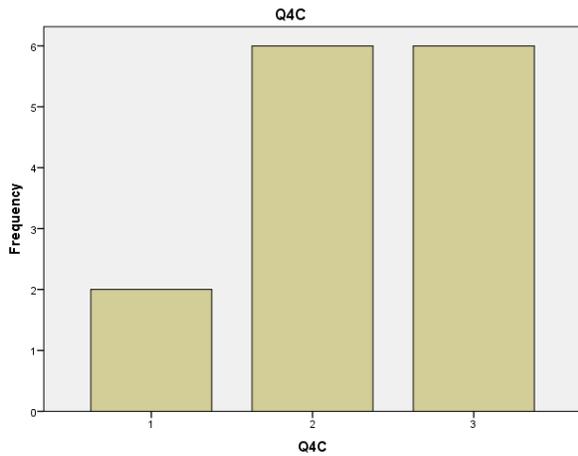
They are against being picky about who they can make friends with; that a woman cannot work as a woman; and that there girls are better than boys in some things. They also strongly believe that a woman necessarily has to stay at home to take care of the kids and not to work. On the other hand, they do not view positively that a man can stay at home to take care of the family while the mother goes to work.

Level: 1 - no; 2 - don't know; 3 - yes

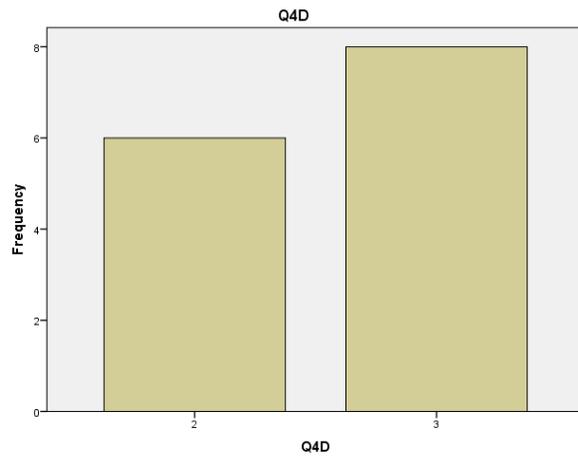


**a) Different religions**

**b) Different Cultures**



**c) About men and women**



**d) people of different ages**

**Figure 6: Distribution of responses related to prior lessons related to different aspects of equality**

When the students were asked to indicate whether they had lessons before with respect to different issues related to equality, it appears that more students indicated that they had lessons with respect to equality among genders and people of different ages, and fewer with respect to different religions and cultures.

*Parent/guardians' Perspective*

As in the case of activity 1, parent/guardians were also sent a questionnaire prior to the activity. 13 parent/guardians filled in the questionnaire. All the questionnaires were filled in by the students' mothers. The parent/guardians of the students doing Activity 2 mainly have secondary education with 7 of the parent/guardians.

**Table 10: Parent/guardians' level of education of students doing activity 2**

Highest Level of Education	No.
Primary	3
Secondary	7
Trade School	2
Sekondary (Vocational)	1
Junior College or similar	0
University	1

The parent/guardians were asked to indicate, like the children, how much they knew about different aspects of equality. They had to indicate on a five-point likert scale (nothing – 0 to a lot -5). As seen from Table 11, their rating mean was not much higher than the average which reflected the parent/guardians' admission that their knowledge is not low but not very much either. The least knowledge was about the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality. This was the same trend obtained in the other primary school parent/guardians.

**Table 11: Average of the ratings given by parent/guardians with respect to amount of knowledge**

**Knowledge Level: 1 – nothing; 2 - a little; 3 - so and so; 4 - quite; 5 - a lot**

Level of knowledge related to:	Parent/guardians' Mean
Equality between men and women	3.08

Different religions that there are across the world	2.85
Equality between people of different cultures and different nationalities	3.00
When people are treated badly because they are from different countries and/or different religions.	2.77
When people are treated differently according to their age.	2.62
The National Commission for the Promotion of Equality	2.08

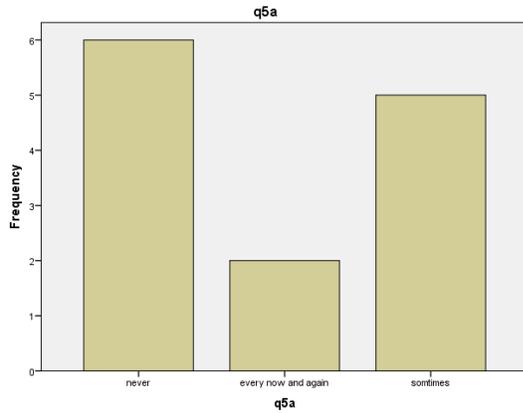
Table 12 indicates that the parent/guardians were also positive mostly with respect to their children making friends with all children at schools, whoever they are; whatever their culture; to learn about different religions; and that older people may still be enthusiastic about their work. They disagree that a woman needs to stay at home to take care of the children and not go to work. They were more neutral with respect to the other statements.

**Table 12: Parent/guardians of Year 1 children response to statements presented  
Level: 1 - strongly disagree; 2 – disagree; 3 – normal; 4 – agree; 5 - strongly agree**

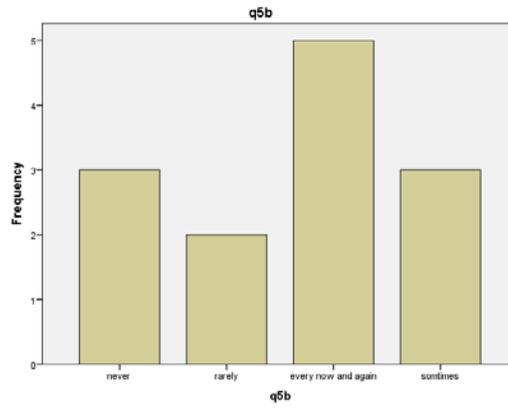
Level of knowledge related to:	Children's Mean
At school I like children to be friends with everybody, even those who are not Maltese.	4.38
A woman can stay at home and not go to work to take care of the	2.08

children.	
Immigrants are people like us and we should respect them.	4.00
I still make friends with children who are of different cultures.	3.38
I do not mind going out to places where people over the age of 65 are present.	2.23
I prefer not to have friends of different religion to mine.	2.54
A woman cannot work as a builder.	2.58
A man can stay at home to take care of the children while the mother goes to work.	3.08
It is good to learn about other religions as you can understand them better.	3.46
People of age 65 years or older can keep on working for as long as they wish.	3.46
There are some things at which girls are better than boys.	2.15
Both young people as well as people over 50 years can love their work with the same passion.	3.15

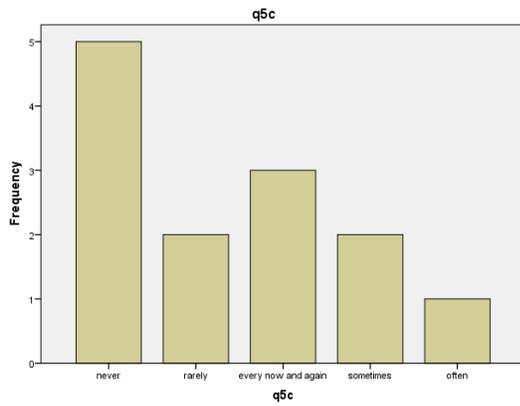
**Level: 1 – never; 2 – rarely; 3 – every now and again; 4 – sometimes; 5 - often**



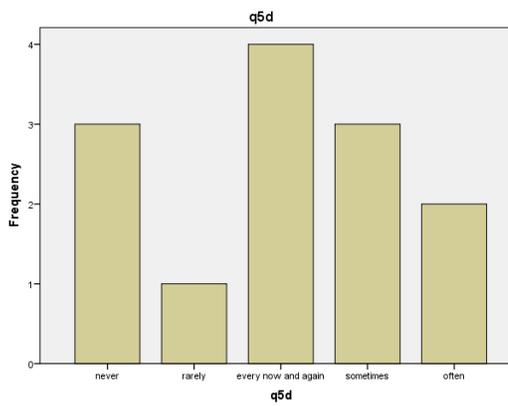
a) Gender Equality



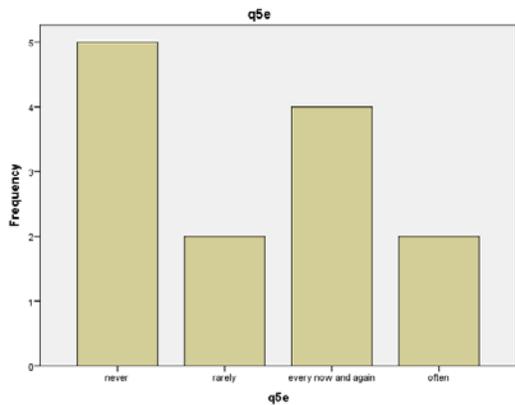
b) Different Nationalities



c) Different Religions



d) different cultures



e) Discrimination

Figure 8: Parent/guardian's frequency of talking to their children about different issues

It is difficult to identify any trends. There are two types of parent/guardians: those who speak about gender equality and another group who do not. In the case of different nationalities, it appears that there is a tendency to talk about this but not that much. A similar trend can be noted with respect to different cultures. Parent/guardians tend to talk less about different Religions as well as not that much about discrimination. This could be because it is thought that these subjects are not relevant to their children or else they are not that aware themselves of such issues.

These two tools provide insight into the perceptions held before the activity.

### **6.2.2 Narrative of the implementation of Activity 2**

Activity 2 focused on stereotypes. In the beginning of the lesson, the teacher asked the children to work in groups and to describe three aspects of one of the group. They then had to read these three characteristics and the rest of the class had to try and guess who the person was. The children enjoyed doing this exercise and were quite excited when they guessed successfully. In fact they were very quick to identify who was being described. The teacher took the opportunity to highlight how we are different and how we have characteristics which make us unique. The teacher then moved on to the actual activity. She presented the children with three photographs of the three persons and the children had to try and guess what job they did. The children were then asked to share their guesses. The children's contributions were very interesting. In the case of the first picture (the doctor), many of the children thought that he was a lawyer because he was wearing a shirt. Some others thought that he was a bus driver because there was a blue line behind him. Overall, they thought that he was educated. In the case of the second photo, the students thought that the lady was a housewife or else a retired grandmother because she had grey hair. Some suggested that she was a gardener as there was a garden in the background. The last picture elicited very interesting suggestions as the children thought that the man was either a street sweeper or else a painter who whitewashes walls. None of the children suggested highly education roles and only one student actually guessed that he was a footballer. The teacher took the opportunity to ask the children why they thought that the third person should be a street sweeper and it emerged that they related this person to many immigrants who are taking these types of jobs. The discussion then led to reflection on how often we tend to judge people by what they appear to be and not who they really are. The teacher emphasised that it is very important to first to get to know people before actually judging them. The teacher then moved to the writing task where the children had to write in Maltese about a friend or a person they met and how they thought she/he was one way but when they got to know them they realise that they were different to what they thought.

The lesson was completed in a normal lesson of 45 minutes and the children appeared to be motivated and engaged for all the duration of the lesson. There were times when they appeared to be excited as they guessed correctly. It appears that the main message was understood by many of the students present.

### **6.2.3 Post- Activity review for Year 4**

The impact of the lesson was evaluated through the interview with the teacher, a focus group with five different parent/guardians, and with post-questionnaires with both the students and the parent/guardians. These are all considered in turn here below.

#### ***The teacher's interview***

The teacher stated how surprised she was to note how the children reflected stereotypes despite being taught at school about these issues. She was also aware on how the lesson tackled the issue of stereotypes which lead to discrimination in a non-intrusive way and yet the impact of the lesson seemed to be so effective. She was pleased with the lesson and felt that it went well and that it did have an impact on the children's attitudes with respect to others.

The teacher said that she would use the activity again and would love to do other similar lessons which take on a similar approach. She believes that there is a lot of potential to teach on these issues while covering curricular content. She believes that teachers need some form of professional development to learn how to tackle and how to teach about these issues. She also felt that there is a need for educational resources and this was something where NCPE could take the initiative and help teachers have more educational material which they can use.

#### ***The parent/guardians' focus group interviews***

The five parent/guardians who participated in the focus group had positive feedback on the activity. It was, however, only three out of the five parent/guardians who reported that their son/daughter had spoken about the lesson that they had. One of these three described in detail the activities done and highlighted how difficult it is to judge people by how they look. One of the other parent/guardians said that her son had told her that they had a lesson about discrimination. This shows how this boy had abstracted the main meaning from the activities organised during the lesson. The parent/guardians highlighted how on the same day the class had been visited by a books author and that they were very excited with this initiative. Hence, they tended to talk a lot about this latter activity and less about the lesson that they had. The parent/guardians were positive about the lesson. They believe that there is a need for today's society which is becoming so diverse and that even they as parent/guardians need to learn how to deal with this new reality.

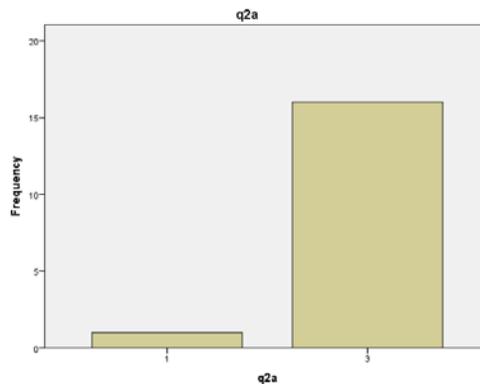
They also liked how the activity was organised with a fun element but which also was effective and had an impact. They believe that these issues need to form an integral part of the curriculum and that tackling them when teaching subject curricula was a very good way to go about it.

### Students post-activity questionnaire

17 students filled in the post-activity questionnaire, of whom 9 were boys and the other 8 were girls.

The students were asked to indicate how much they enjoyed the lesson. From Figure 9 it can be seen that only one of the students stated that she/he only liked the lesson a little. The rest stated that they enjoyed themselves a lot.

Level: 1 – a little; 2 - so and so; 3 - a lot

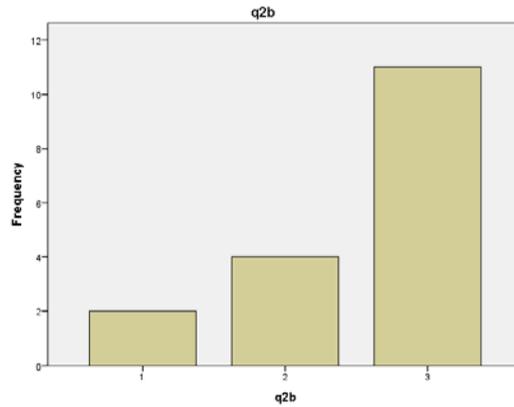


**Figure 9: Frequency of how much the children enjoyed the lesson overall**

Figure 10 shows that the he majority of the children also specified that they enjoyed the first game. Two of the students stated that they only liked it ‘a little’ and another few that they liked it ‘so and so’.

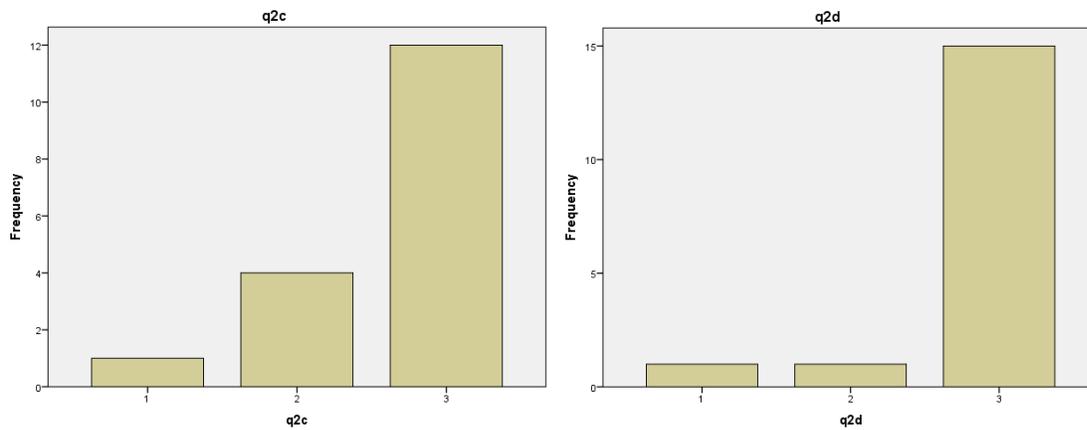
The children evidently enjoyed discussing with the other children as well as sharing their opinions as shown in Figure 11. This reflects how much the children appreciate the activities organized during the lesson and that both enjoyed and learned from what they were involved in. The students who did not like it that much were few. This could be for various reasons and may not necessarily be the impact of particular aspects of the lesson.

Level: 1 – a little; 2 - so and so; 3 - a lot



**Figure 10: How much the children enjoyed the first game**

Level: 1 – a little; 2 - so and so; 3 - a lot



**Figure 11: Frequency of how much the children enjoyed a) discussing what you did with the other children and b) sharing their opinions with the other children.**

**Table 13: Students' statements on how much they learned with respect to different skills**

Statement	A little	So and so	A lot
How to respect people of different age	0	2	15
How to respect people of different religion	0	2	15
How to respect people of different culture	1	3	13
Not to differentiate between men and women	2	5	10
To listen to the opinion of others	0	1	16
Not to judge people from how they look	1	1	15
To accept the opinion of others	0	5	12
Not to have problems meeting other people	1	1	15
Not to fight with your friends if you disagree with them	1	1	15
Know when somebody is treated unjustly	0	2	15

Table 13 indicates that the children learned a number of different skills which increase their sensitivity related to equality. The aspect which was least positively rated was the one related to gender difference despite the example of the women whom they all thought was a house wife or a grandmother. Most of the other skills were rated highly by most of the children which indicates how engaged they were and how much they felt that they learned

When the children were asked to indicate whether they would like to have more lessons like this, 15 out of the 17 respondents were very eager and positive while the remaining two were not that positive. In the same way, when asked how much they had learnt during the lesson, 1 said 'so and so' while the remaining 16 indicated that they had learned 'a lot'. These responses show how much the children enjoyed the lesson as well as how much they actually also learned and would like to learn more.

#### **Parent/guardians' post-activity questionnaire**

13 parent/guardians filled in and returned the questionnaire. In all these cases, the questionnaires were filled in by the students; mothers. As seen from Table 14, the majority of the parent/guardians have a secondary education and three primary education. There is one parent/guardian who is a graduate.

**Table 14: Parent/guardians' level of education of students doing activity 2**

Highest Level of Education	No.
Primary	3
Secondary	7
Trade School	2
Sekondary (Vocational)	1
Junior College or similar	0
University	1

Only 5 of the parent/guardians reported that their children had talked about the activity at home.

**Table 15: Parent/guardians' responses about the children's learning**

	Nothing	A little	So and So	Quite	A lot
Learning about equality	3	0	2	4	0
Learning about identifying discrimination	0	0	2	2	5
How much do you feel that children should learn about these things?	0	0	2	3	8

Table 15 indicates that when asked how much they believed that their children had learned about equality and about identifying discrimination, responses obtained varied and the positive responses were at 'so and so' and 'quite'. Three parent/guardians stated that they had not learned anything. This is understandable as many of the children did not share the experience with their parent/guardians.

On the other hand, when asked how much they feel that children should learn about these issues, the parent/guardians were quite positive and think that they are very important things that should be included in the curriculum. Unfortunately, two parent/guardians stated that they would not wish their children to learn about these aspects while three do not see them integrated within other curricular subjects.

## 6.2.4 Overall evaluation of Activity 2

In this activity it can be said that the children were influenced on being careful not to judge people by the way that they look. The students felt that they learned many skills. The teacher was surprised to see how the stereotypic images emerged so clearly even if they educate within the school against these. She appreciated the non-intrusive approach. Like the first teacher she struggled to be sensitive and adhered exactly to the lesson plan. The children also completed the writing task successfully even if they did not write many things. The children in this class shared less with their parent/guardians although there still was an element of transmission from the children to their parent/guardians. Although the lesson did not have a strong impact as the one with Year 1 students, it was still quite successful overall.

## 6.3 Evaluation of Activity 3

This activity was carried out in two classes, one in a Form 2 boys' school and one in a Form 2 girls school. These will be tackled together in order to provide insight into the lesson which was the same one.

### 6.3.1 Pre-activity perceptions and understanding for the Form 2 class

Both students and parent/guardians of the two classes were asked to fill in the questionnaires. The responses will be presented in one table but indicating the responses obtained in each school.

#### **The students' perspective**

20 students in the boys' school filled in the pre-activity questionnaire. In the case of girls, a total of 19 questionnaires were collected. The students were asked to indicate how much they felt that they knew about different aspects. The students were asked to rate how much they knew on a five-point scale : 'nothing - 1', to 'a lot - 5'.

**Table 16: Means obtained from students for level of knowledge**

**Knowledge level: 1- nothing; 2 – little; 3 - so and so; 4 – quite; 5 - a lot**

<b>Level of knowledge related to:</b>	<b>Boys' school No.</b>	<b>Girls' School No</b>
Equality between different people across the world	3.75	4.05
Equality between men and women	3.75	3.89
Equality between people of different cultures	3.5	3.89
Respecting people of different religions.	4.3	4.26
How people can be discriminated against.	3.25	3.63
The National Commission for the Promotion of Equality	2.65	1.63

It can be noted from Table 16 that both the boys and girls rated the different aspects highly and claimed to be quite knowledgeable about most of the aspects. They claimed to be least knowledgeable with respect to the role and responsibilities of the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE). The students were also presented with a number of statements and asked to rate how much they strongly disagreed (1) to strongly agreed (5) on a five-point likert scale. Similar patterns of responses were obtained for both the boys and the girls. It can be noted that both believe strongly that one should be friends with everybody and that immigrants should be respected as they are people too.

**Table 17: Children’s response to statements presented to the children**  
**Level: 1 - strongly disagree; 2 – disagree; 3 – neutral; 4 – agree; 5 - strongly agree**

<b>Level of knowledge related to:</b>	<b>Boys’ school No.</b>	<b>Girls’ School No</b>
At school I like to make friends with everybody, even those who are not Maltese.	4.3	4.3
A woman can stay at home and not go to work to take care of the children.	1.95	1.53
Immigrants are people like us and we should respect them.	4.15	4.16
I still make friends with children who are of different cultures.	4.10	3.89
I do not mind going out to places where people over the age of 65 are present.	2.40	2.53
I prefer not to have friends of different religion to mine.	2.00	2.16
A woman cannot work as a builder.	2.75	2.63
A man can stay at home to take care of the children while the mother goes to work.	2.9	3.05
It is good to learn about other religions as you can understand them better.	3.8	3.32
People of age 65 years or older can keep on working for as long as they wish.	3.75	3.84
There are some things at which girls are better than boys.	3.2	1.83
Both young people as well as people over 50 years can love their work with the same passion.	3.55	3.79

They both, however, did not feel that comfortable going to places where there are people who are over the age of 65 and do not think that boys are better than girls in any way.

**Table18: Lesson received about the following**

Lesson received about the following	Boys' school No.		Girls' School No.	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Different religions	19	1	16	3
Different Cultures	20	0	18	1
Equality between men and women	15	5	19	0
How to respect people of different ages	16	4	18	1
how to respect people of different sexual orientation	10	10	14	5

Most of the students in both schools indicated that they had received lessons on related topics before. This shows how the schools have already started to take on the challenge of preparing students for a diverse society and promoting values of equality. This is positive and reflects why such a positive response to the activities was received.

***Parent/guardians' Perspective***

As in the case of the primary activities, parent/guardians were also sent a questionnaire prior to the activity. 11 parent/guardians of boys filled in the questionnaire. In the case of the girls, 20 questionnaires were collected. All the questionnaires of the boys were filled in by the students' mothers. In the case of the girls, 3 of the questionnaires were filled in by the fathers and the rest by the mothers. The parent/guardians of the students doing Activity 3 mainly have secondary education with 7 of the parent/guardians. Three parent/guardians have only primary education and another two trade school level. In the case of the parent/guardians of the girls, the majority – 9 have only secondary education, 4 went to trade school, 3 have up to sixth form level and two are graduates.

**Table 19: Parent/guardians' level of education of students doing activity 2**

Highest Level of Education	Boys' school No.	Girls' School No
Primary	0	0
Secondary	7	9
Trade School	0	4
Sekondary (Vocational)	1	0
Junior College or similar	1	3
University	2	2

The parent/guardians were asked to indicate, like the children, how much they knew about different aspects of equality. They had to indicate on a five-point likert scale (nothing – 1 to a lot -5). As revealed from Table 20, the parent/guardians expressed a high level of knowledge of equality between men and women, different religions across the world, when people are treated badly; and when people are treated differently. They both expressed limited amount of knowledge with respect to the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE).

**Table 20: Average of the ratings given by parent/guardians with respect to amount of knowledge**

**Knowledge level: 1 – nothing; 2 - a little; 3 - so and so; 4 – quite; 5 - a lot**

Level of knowledge related to:	Boys' School Mean	Girls' School Mean
Equality between men and women	4.18	3.74
Different religions that there are across the world	4.09	3.68
Equality between people of different cultures and different nationalities	4.09	3.63
When people are treated badly because they are from different countries and/or different religions.	4.00	3.05
When people are treated differently according to their age.	3.82	3.16
The National Commission for the Promotion of Equality	3.00	2.16

Table 21 shows that the parent/guardians also expressed the same attitudes and values with respect to different issues of equality. The parent/guardians would like to see their children making friends with everybody; that immigrants should be respected; that older people should be allowed to continue to work; that a man can stay at home to take care of the family; and that one should learn about other religions. They were, on the other hand, not that much in favour of women stopping work to stay at home to take care of their children, and that girls are better than boys.

**Table 21: Parent/guardians of Form 2 children’s response to statements presented  
Level: 1 - strongly disagree; 2 – disagree; 3 – normal; 4 – agree; 5 - strongly agree**

<b>Level of knowledge related to:</b>	<b>Boys’ School Mean</b>	<b>Girls’ School Mean</b>
At school I like children to be friends with everybody, even those who are not Maltese.	4.55	4.37
A woman can stay at home and not go to work to take care of the children.	2.36	2.37
Immigrants are people like us and we should respect them.	4.18	4.21
I still make friends with children who are of different cultures.	3.27	3.84
I do not mind going out to places where people over the age of 65 are present.	2.18	2.63
I prefer not to have friends of different religion to mine.	1.82	2.05
A woman cannot work as a builder.	2.45	3.05
A man can stay at home to take care of the children while the mother goes to work.	3.45	3.63
It is good to learn about other religions as you can understand them better.	3.36	3.68
People of age 65 years or older can keep on working for as long as they wish.	3.64	3.79
There are some things at which girls are better than boys.	2.18	2.11
Both young people as well as people over 50 years can love their work with the same passion.	4.27	4.11

Parent/guardians were also asked to indicate how often they talk to their children about issues related to equality, diversity and mainstreaming. It can be seen from Table 22 that more or less the same mean was obtained for the different aspects. It appears that parent/guardians talk about these issues every now and again, which is quite acceptable.

**Table 22: Parent/guardians of Form 2 children’s response to how often they speak about Equality issues**

**Level: 1- never; 2 – rarely; 3 – every now and again; 4 – sometimes; 5 - often**

<b>How often parent/guardians talk to their children about the following</b>	<b>Mean Boys</b>	<b>Mean Girls</b>
Equality between men and women	3.45	3.05
People of different nationalities	3.45	3.42
People of different Religions	3.73	3.11
People of different cultures	3.82	3.16
Discrimination against people	3.18	3.05

### 6.3.2 Narrative of the implementation of Activity 3

This lesson was trialled twice, once in a girls’ secondary school and once in a boys’ secondary school. There were 20 students in the boys’ class and 21 students in the girls’ class. They were more or less implemented in similar ways. However, in the boys’ school, the ice breaker was given more attention and times. The boys in fact enjoyed the activity even if they struggled with their English vocabulary in order to manage to find a word which described them and which starts with the same letter as the first letter of their name. There was quite an element of creativity and linguistic aspects in this exercise. The activity immediately highlighted how the students are different and they all have different characteristics to describe them. The ice breaker was not really given much importance in the girls’ school and the teacher moved on to the main activity, the comprehension text faster. Both teachers eventually tackled the text. In both cases the students were asked first to read it on their own and then they read it as a whole class to go through any difficult vocabulary that they may have encountered. Having read the text, the teacher in the boys’ class asked the students what the lesson was about. The boys immediately highlighted how the story shows that what is built to suit one person does not necessary suit another. In the case of the girls, they tended to stick more to the text and the questions set. Both

teachers tackled the questions and asked the children to work in groups and to tackle the questions. In the boy's class emphasis was placed on how the elephant and the giraffe felt. In this case, there was evidence of empathy with the elephant who felt inadequate in the giraffe's house. The girls, on the other hand, worked more conscientiously on the questions and they tackled the questions each in turn. In both cases, there was a class discussion with the presentation of the answers from each group. In the case of the girls' class, many of the issues emerged as the groups presented their answers. Many views and reasons for which housing is not adaptable to everybody were raised which shows the degree to which the girls thought of ways through which often groups of people end up excluded. In the case of the boys' school, the teacher prepared a powerpoint with the picture of two old people. This cued the students to realise how old people living in flats high up where there is no lift are often in the same position as the elephant as they have many difficulties of access and this limits their quality of life. The boys too expressed a lot of empathy and put forward many possible solutions to the problem presented.

In both cases, the students were given the questions to answer as homework. The time of one single lesson was adequate to implement the planned comprehension exercise. It has to be said that the lesson delivered in the girls' school tended to be a little more traditional but there was a good balance between language learning and learning about mainstreaming. In the case of the boys' school, the lesson was more modern in approach but more emphasis was placed on the main message on mainstreaming. Overall both lessons worked quite well.

### **6.3.3 Post- Activity review for Form 2**

Evaluation of the activity delivered was carried out as an outcome of an interview with the teacher and with post-activity questionnaires set to both students and parent/guardians.

#### ***Teachers' interview***

Both teachers felt that the lesson went well and that they managed to teach both English as well as the issue of mainstreaming. They believed that this was a positive and effective way of including teaching about equality issues through integrations with other subjects. In fact, both teachers said that it was not the first time that they had tackled such topics in their lesson. Both teachers appreciated the non-intrusive aspect of the lessons and were pleased to see how the students managed to demonstrate a level of empathy about the elephant's situation. They stated that they would use the text again with the other classes that they teach but also in the next years. They highlighted how they felt that teachers need to be better trained to teach about diversity due

to the fast changing nature of our society. They also expressed the need that there is for teaching resources which provide teachers with educational material that they could adapt and use with the classes that they teach. Both teachers felt that they have the added responsibility of teaching for equality but that they are not yet prepared enough and do not have enough skills to do this effectively and in the right manner.

***Students’ Perspective***

A total of 20 boys answered the questionnaire. On the other hand there were 20 girls who filled in the questionnaire.

**Table 23: Degree of how much the Form 2 students enjoyed the lessons**

**Level: 1 - not at all; 2 - a little; 3 - so and so; 4 – quite; 5 - a lot**

	<b>Boys’ School Mean</b>	<b>Girls’ School Mean</b>
How much they liked the lesson overall	4.45	4.52
How much they enjoyed the ice breaker	4.05	3.36
How much they enjoyed discussing	4.0	4.05
How much they enjoyed sharing their opinion with their classmates	3.7	4.52

It can be noted from Table 23 that both the boys and the girls stated that they enjoyed the lesson and that they enjoyed discussing and sharing their opinions with their classmates. The rating given was very high which shows how much students enjoy participatory and informal approaches to learning. The ice breaker was rated less by the girls and this reflects the lack of importance given to this activity by the teacher.

**Table 24: Form 2 Secondary students' perception of degree of learning**

**Level: 1 - a little; 2 - so and so; 3 – quite; 4 - a lot**

	<b>Boys' School Mean</b>	<b>Girls' School Mean</b>
Respecting people of different age.	3.40	3.29
Respecting people of different Religion.	3.05	3.41
Respecting people of different cultures.	3.29	3.47
Letting other talk and listening to them.	3.30	3.71
Not to judge people from how they look.	2.95	3.71
To accept others even if they have a different opinion to yours.	3.1	3.65
To get to know people who are different.	2.95	3.71
To disagree with your friends without arguing with them.	2.6	3.29
To become aware of situations where you are discriminated against.	2.25	3.35

The students had to rate how much they learned different skills on a 4-point scale. Table 24 shows that when one considers that the maximum was a total of 4, it can be noted that the students felt that they had learned a lot. This is very positive as the students are aware of those aspects that they are learning during the lesson which are over and above the learning of subject matter, in this case the English language. While the boys rated a little lower the skills related to disagreeing without arguing, and become aware of being discriminated against, the girls rated these higher. It was evident during the lessons that the girls worked more collaboratively during the lesson and they also were given more time to discuss.

**Table 25: The degree to which the Form 2 students felt that they learned on equality issues**

**Knowledge Level: 1 – nothing; 2 – little; 3 - so and so; 4 – quite; 5 - a lot**

	<b>Boys’ School Mean</b>	<b>Girls’ School Mean</b>
Equality between people	3.10	4.29
Equality between genders	3.20	4.29
Equality between cultures	3.45	3.94
How to respect people of different religions	3.30	4.00
How people can be discriminated against	2.45	4.01
Learned about the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality	3.00	2.53
How discrimination leads to people being treated differently	3.85	4.23

In the case of learning about different aspects of equality, the students had to rate from 1-5. It can be noted from Table 25 that the girls rated higher than the boys in most of the aspects. This is possibly because there was a longer discussion during the girls’ lesson than that of the boys. The boys rated low the issue of being discriminated against. It could be that they understood this in a wider sense that the discrimination in housing which was the specific topic of the activity. On the other hand the girls felt that they had learned less about the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality. In fact, in both lessons, the teacher did not give much emphasis to NCPE and at most they mentioned it and described in brief what it does.

Among the boys, 14 boys stated that they learned about how to fight discrimination, while another 4 said that they did not. The rest did no answer this question. When asked if they would like to have more lessons like this, 16 students said that they would like more lesson, one said no, and the rest did not answer. These responses provide a positive assessment of the lesson overall by the boys. In the case of the girls, 14 students stated that they had learnt how to stop discrimination while 3 students said that they did not. The rest did not answer. In the case of

whether they would like to have more lessons like this, 16 students stated in the affirmative and one student was against. The rest did not answer.

### Parent/guardians' post-activity questionnaire

19 parent/guardians from the girls school filled in and returned the questionnaire. In all these cases, the questionnaires were filled in by the students' mothers, except one in which case it was filled in by the father. In the case of the boys' school, only four students brought back the questionnaire, again filled in by the mothers. This was a little disappointing but it also reflects how boys tend to be careless and forgetful.

**Table 26: Parent/guardians' level of education of students doing activity 2**

Highest Level of Education	Boys' School No.	Girls' School No.
Primary	0	0
Secondary	2	11
Trade School	1	2
Sekondary (Vocational)	0	0
Junior College or similar	0	2
University	1	2

The majority of the parent/guardians from the girls' school have a secondary education. There were then two parent/guardians from a trade school, two with sixth form level and another two who were graduates. In the case of the boys, two parent/guardians had a secondary education, one sixth form level and one was a graduate. Three out of the four boys talked to their parent/guardians about the lesson. In the case of the girls, 14 had talked to their parent/guardians about the lesson while 4 did not.

**Table 27: Parent/guardians’ responses about the children’s learning**

**Knowledge Level: 1 – nothing; 2 - a little; 3 - so and so; 4 – quite; 5 - a lot**

Degree to which the parent/guardians felt that their children learned with respect to	Boys’ School No.	Girls’ School No.
Learning about equality in general	4.0	4.5
Learning about identifying situation of discrimination	3.5	4.0
How much do you feel that children should learn about these things?	4.5	4.6

As indicated in Table 27, both the parent/guardians of the boys and those of the girls felt that their children had learned quite an amount during the lesson. They also stated that they were in favour of their children learning about these issues. These responses are coherent with what the parent/guardians of the primary children in the other two classes stated. This shows that there seems to be parent/guardian support for the inclusion of such learning within the curriculum.

All the boys’ parent/guardians stated that they were in favour of their children learning about these issues, but one of them was against this learning taking place in an integrated way. In the case of the girls’ parent/guardians, all the parent/guardians except one were in favour of their children having lesson on these issues. 3 out of the 19 respondents, however, did not agree that these lessons should be integrated within subjects. The remaining 16 parent/guardians, on the other hand, agreed.

### **6.3.4 Overall evaluation of Activity 3**

It can be said that the lesson was considered to be successful even if implemented in slightly different styles. The message about mainstreaming in housing was introduced even if the term ‘mainstreaming’ was not used. This activity had an added strength on the previous two activities as it had a strong subject component which was not as evident in the primary level activities. In fact, if anything, this activity showed how it is possible to cover a subject area while also educating about issues related to equality, diversity and mainstreaming.

## 6.4 Evaluation of Activity 4

This section includes the evaluation of activity 4 which was carried out with Form 4 students during their PSD (Personal and Social Development) lesson.

### 6.4.1 Pre-activity perceptions and understanding for the Form 4 class

Before the activity pre-questionnaires were set to both the students and their parent/guardians.

9 students in the boys' school filled in the pre-activity questionnaire. This is because classes are divided during their PSD lessons. All the 9 students also participated in the lesson. The students were asked to rate how much they knew about the subjects on a five-point scale: 'nothing - 1', to 'a lot - 5'.

**Table 28: Means obtained from students for level of knowledge**

**Level: 1 – nothing; 2 – little; 3 - so and so; 4 – quite; 5 - a lot**

<b>Level of knowledge related to:</b>	<b>Boys' school No.</b>
Equality between different people across the world	2.77
Equality between men and women	3.44
Equality between people of different cultures	2.67
Respecting people of different religions.	4.00
How people can be discriminated against.	2.22
The National Commission for the Promotion of Equality	2.22

It can be noted from Table 28 that the students claimed to be most knowledgeable with respect to respecting people of different religions. They were also knowledgeable, even if to a less extent on equality between men and women. It is interesting to note how these students felt that they are

not that knowledgeable with respect to how people can be discriminated against as well as about the role of the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality.

The students were also presented with a number of statements and asked to rate how much they strongly disagreed (1) to strongly agreed (5) on a five-point Likert scale.

**Table 29: Children's response to statements presented to the children**  
**Level: 1 - strongly disagree; 2 – disagree; 3 – neutral; 4 – agree; 5 – strongly agree**

<b>Level of knowledge related to:</b>	<b>Mean</b>
At school I like to make friends with everybody, even those who are not Maltese.	2.78
A woman can stay at home and not go to work to take care of the children.	1.78
Immigrants are people like us and we should respect them.	3.56
I still make friends with children who are of different cultures.	3.67
I do not mind going out to places where people over the age of 65 are present.	3.56
I prefer not to have friends of different religion to mine.	3.22
A woman cannot work as a builder.	3.00
A man can stay at home to take care of the children while the mother goes to work.	3.11
It is good to learn about other religions as you can understand them better.	3.89
People of age 65 years or older can keep on working for as long as they wish.	3.11
There are some things at which girls are better than boys.	2.89
Both young people as well as people over 50 years can love their work with the same passion.	3.78

Table 29 reveals that the students agreed most strongly with learning about different religions, that immigrants are people and should be respected, and to be in places where there are also people who are over the age of 65. They disagreed that a woman has to stay home to take care of the children instead of going to work. They were towards the neutral with respect to making friends, and in accepting that girls can be better than boys in some things. It can be noted that overall the boys have positive values related to issues of equality.

**Table 30: Distribution of responses related to prior lessons related to different aspects of equality**

Lesson received about the following	Yes	No
Different religions	9	0
Different Cultures	9	0
Equality between men and women	8	1
How to respect people of different ages	6	3
how to respect people of different sexual orientation	8	1

It can be noted from Table 30 that these students feel that they have received many lessons related to most issues on equality. This is a positive aspect. In fact, the teacher did indicate in the interview that they had tackled a number of related issues in previous years in PSD.

***Parent/guardians' Perspective***

Parent/guardians were also sent a questionnaire prior to the activity. 6 parent/guardians filled in the questionnaire. All the questionnaires were filled in by the students' mothers. The parent/guardians of the students doing Activity 4 mainly have secondary education with 7 of the parent/guardians. Two parent/guardians have secondary level of education, two have post-secondary education and two are tertiary graduates.

**Table 31: Parent/guardians' level of education of students doing activity 4**

Highest Level of Education	No.
Primary	0
Secondary	2
Trade School	0
Secondary (Vocational)	0
Junior College or similar	2
University	2

The parent/guardians were asked to indicate, like the children, how much they knew about different aspects of equality. They had to indicate on a five-point likert scale (nothing – 0 to a lot -5). It can be noted that the parent/guardians declared that they are very knowledgeable practically across all the aspects. As indicated in Table 32, the only one where they declared that they were less knowledgeable referred to the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE).

**Table 32: Average of the ratings given by parent/guardians with respect to amount of knowledge**

**Knowledge Level: 1 – nothing; 2 - a little; 3 - so and so; 4 – quite; 5 - a lot**

<b>Level of knowledge related to:</b>	<b>Parent/guardians' Mean</b>
Equality between men and women	4.3
Different religions that there are across the world	4.0
Equality between people of different cultures and different nationalities	3.8
When people are treated badly because they are from different countries and/or different religions.	3.5
When people are treated differently according to their age.	3.8
The National Commission for the Promotion of Equality	2.8

Once again parent/guardians demonstrate holding positive attitudes from Table 33 as they are in favour that their children make friends with everyone; that immigrants should be respected; that men can stay at home to take care of the children; that older people can stay on at work as much as they wish and that they can still be enthusiastic about work. They are against that women have to stay home to take care of the family and not go to work, and that girls are better than boys.

**Table 33: Parent/guardians of Form 4 to statements presented**

**Level: 1 - strongly disagree; 2 – disagree; 3 – normal; 4 – agree; 5 - strongly agree**

<b>Level of knowledge related to:</b>	<b>Children's Mean</b>
At school I like children to be friends with everybody, even those who are not Maltese.	4.50
A woman can stay at home and not go to work to take care of the children.	2.17
Immigrants are people like us and we should respect them.	4.33
I still make friends with children who are of different cultures.	3.50
I do not mind going out to places where people over the age of 65 are present.	2.17
I prefer not to have friends of different religion to mine.	2.33
A woman cannot work as a builder.	2.67
A man can stay at home to take care of the children while the mother goes to work.	3.67
It is good to learn about other religions as you can understand them better.	4.00
People of age 65 years or older can keep on working for as long as they wish.	4.00
There are some things at which girls are better than boys.	1.83
Both young people as well as people over 50 years can love their work with the same passion.	4.33

It appears from Table 34 that parent/guardians speak to their children most with respect to different cultures and different sexual orientations, although not often. They speak a little less with respect to the other topics.

**Table 34: Parent/guardian’s frequency of talking to their children about different issues**

**Level: 1 – never; 2 – rarely; 3 – sometimes; 4 - often**

<b>Parent/guardians talking about the following</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Different religions	2.83
Different Cultures	3.33
Equality between men and women	3.00
How to respect people of different ages	2.67
how to respect people of different sexual orientation	3.33

#### **6.4.2 Narrative of the implementation of Activity 4**

This activity was implemented with a PSD class and there were 9 students present. The lesson was conducted in the school chapel. The teacher started with the ice breaker activity where the students were organised in groups of three and asked to note what they had in common in each group and what they had different. After a few minutes they were asked to share these with the rest of the class. It was interesting to see how different elements emerged. The teacher used these different examples to note how we are all different even if we have some common aspects. She then moved on to show the students a short powerpoint which referred to instances in history where there have been great injustices carried out e.g. civil wars, second world war etc. The students immediately reacted by saying that the actions of the people were not justified. The teacher then moved on to ask the students to work again in groups and to think of those instances where they either experienced discrimination or else they witnessed discrimination taking place. The students then shared their contributions. One group mentioned the situation where girls at scouts are not allowed to play football by the coach and he sends them away without even given them the chance to show what they are capable of doing. This discussion centred around what they can do and one of the boys said how he told the coach once to go away and to invite the girls, he insisted that he always invites the girls as this makes no difference to him. Another

groups touched on sexual orientation and how others tend to pick on those who are homosexual and that after all they are also normal people. The third group told the story of a black person who was shouted at by a bus driver because he did not have the exact change. They said that the driver acted this way because this person was black and that this was not acceptable. The teacher then rounded up the discussion and introduced to the students the role of the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality and how it protects and investigates cases of discrimination. The lesson was closed with the video against discrimination which was produced by NCPE.

#### **6.4.3 Post- Activity review for Form 4**

The impact and the effectiveness of the lesson were measured by means of an interview with the teacher and through post-activity questionnaires set to students and parent/guardians.

##### ***Teacher interview***

The teacher felt that the lesson overall went well. She said that she had tackled similar issues before but she was very happy to see how the students provided their own experiences and reflected upon them. The teacher explained how she felt that she needed further training with respect to how to tackle such sensitive issues. She would like to know more about the role and work of NCPE and to learn more about possible pedagogies that can be adopted and which are sensitive to the issues tackled. The teacher also felt that there is a lot of space to include these types of themes within the current curriculum and that teachers would benefit if there were more resources available to teachers and which they can use with their students.

##### ***Students' Post-activity reactions***

Students were again invited to fill in a questionnaire at the end of the activity in order to capture their feedback on the lesson.

The 9 students all filled this post-activity questionnaire. From the students responses of Table 35 it is evident that the students enjoyed the lesson very much and also the different approaches that were included. This shows how the approach selected was meaningful and enjoyable for the students and that they enjoy learning through these modes of teaching.

**Table 35: Degree to which the Form 4 students enjoyed aspects of the lesson**

**Level: 1 - not at all; 2 - a little; 3 - so and so; 4 – quite; 5 - a lot**

	<b>Mean</b>
How much did you enjoy the lesson	4.33
How much did you enjoy the ice-breaker	4.00
How much did you enjoy the discussion	4.22
How much did you like sharing your opinions with your classmates	4.11

**Table 36: Form 4 Students’ rating on how much they have learned**

**Level: 1 - a little; 2 - so and so; 3 – quite; 3 - a lot**

<b>Skills learned during the lesson</b>	<b>Mean Rating</b>
Respecting people of different age.	3.44
Respecting people of different Religion.	3.56
Respecting people of different cultures.	3.33
Letting other talk and listening to them.	3.33
Not to judge people from how they look.	3.67
To accept others even if they have a different opinion to yours.	3.11
To get to know people who are different.	3.72
To disagree with your friends without arguing with them.	2.44
To become aware of situations where you are discriminated against.	3.44

It can be noted from Table 36 that the students feel that they have learned skills during the lesson with many of the means being between 3 and 4 (between ‘so and so’ and ‘quite’). The skills least considered was that of how to disagree without arguing. It has to be said that the lesson did not have any instances where there were disagreements and this could be why it was rated lower. The highest rating was obtained on how not to judge others by their appearance. This is understandable as this is related to the topic of the activity which targeted discrimination.

Table 37 shows that the students felt that they learned most about equality among genders. This is possibly so due to the example of girls playing football which was discussed. However, the students overall declared that they learned about practically all the aspects and this is encouraging as it shows that the lesson was effective and the main messages were received and understood by the students.

**Table 37: Rating on how much Form 4 students learnt about different aspects of equality**

**Level: 1 – nothing; 2 – little; 3 - so and so; 4 – quite; 5 - a lot**

<b>Aspects that students learnt about</b>	<b>Mean Rating</b>
<b>Equality between people</b>	3.77
<b>Equality between genders</b>	4.00
<b>Equality between cultures</b>	3.89
<b>Respecting people of different Religions</b>	3.89
<b>How people can be discriminated against</b>	3.89
<b>The National Commission for the Promotion of Equality</b>	3.44

Finally the students were asked to indicate how much they have learnt about stopping instances of discrimination and whether they would like to have more lesson like this one. All the students stated that they learned about how to stop discrimination and 7 out of 9 stated that they would like to have more lessons like this one.

### **Parent/guardians' post-activity questionnaire**

It has to be noted that none of the students brought back the post-activity questionnaire with them, despite several efforts and thus in the case of this activity, it is not possible to know the parent/guardians' reactions and opinions to tackling such issues within the school context.

#### **6.4.4 Overall evaluation of Activity 4**

It can be stated that this activity managed to make students more aware of instances of discrimination. Although the teacher did not highlight all the six grounds of discrimination, she did touch on many of them and provided a wide overview of the types of discrimination that people may experience. The students reacted well and did contribute with relevant examples which allowed the teacher to deliver the lesson as planned and to reach the objectives set. It has to be said that this lesson was the last lesson on a Friday and thus it was positive to see that despite the students were tired, they still participated and were engaged.

## 7.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

The previous section involved the evaluation of each and every of the four activities designed. A number of issues have emerged from this pilot activity and which need to be reflected upon. The following conclusions about the exercise can be made:

- ***Teachers tend to be willing to teach about aspects of equality, diversity and mainstreaming:*** It was easy to find teachers in the schools contacted who were willing to trial the activities. This reflected a positive approach and openness by teachers to try things out. The five teachers involved in this study were enthusiastic and motivated to work with the new material;
- ***The ice breakers had a positive impact and engaged the students from the start:*** The ice breakers at the beginning of the lesson were found to both help students settle down and be relaxed but also to set the context for the activity which was to follow. This shows how a well thought out ice breaker does not only serve to help the learners feel comfortable but can also act as an introduction to the lesson;
- ***The non-intrusive approach was greatly evident in all the four activities:*** The teachers were surprised by how sensitively they had managed to touch on the issues targeted and yet the message to the students was still very strong and effective. They became aware how it is possible to promote tolerance and equality without using any of the labels which tend to lead to discrimination;
- ***Those participating in the pilot study are not knowledgeable about NCPE:*** It was evident from the questionnaires, but also in the teacher interviews and the parent/guardians' focus groups that many people know very little about NCPE, its role and responsibilities as a public organisation;
- ***All the children at the different ages understood the main learning message of the lesson:*** The students' contributions during the lesson showed how the students could understand the main message behind each lesson. This was also achieved in the case of the 5-year old

students. This shows that the activities were designed to be appropriate to the target ages for which they were designed;

- ***Parent/guardians tend to consider teaching about these issue quite positively;*** It is positive to see that the majority of the parent/guardians viewed this initiative positively and that they felt that this was a need in today's education of our young generations. This means that the inclusion of such activities is also supported by the parent/guardians;
- ***There is great potential to include the teaching of such issues within the current subject content areas;*** The activities have shown how it is possible to embed the learning of such activities in subject content areas successfully. This implies that there is no need to require any additional school time in order to include teaching about equality and related issued within the current compulsory education;
- ***Teachers struggle to manage to keep the non-intrusive approach;*** It was notices that teachers tended to want to prefer tackling aspects of equality and discrimination in a direct way and that it was not easy for them to be careful not to use labels and to be as non-intrusive as possible. None the less, at the end of the lesson they appreciated the effectiveness of such approach;
- ***The students did talk about the activities with their parent/guardians;*** It is very positive to find out that students, particularly in the primary school, shared their experience at home and could articulate the main message. This means that it is possible to educate the parent/guardians through the students
- ***The teachers intend to keep using these activities in the future:*** It was positive to know that the teachers liked the resources enough to want to keep them and to use them at a later stage either this year with other classes or next scholastic year. This shows how the activities developed were teacher friendly and easy to implement;
- ***Teachers need training on the best pedagogical approach to teach about these issues;*** All the teachers interviewed highlighted how there is a need for the professional development of teachers in learning how best to tackle these issues in the classroom. They felt that the pedagogical approach was new to them and it would help teachers to be sensitised and trained on the need to be non-intrusive in approach;

- ***Teachers expressed a need to have more teaching resources which they can adapt and use to teach their students:*** All the teachers interviewed felt strongly that there was a lack of resources about these issues and that schools, teachers, and ultimately students could benefit from the availability of more such resources.

Based on these outcomes of the pilot study, a number of recommendations are being put forward

- ***There should be the inclusion of a commitment to teaching about such issues in education within policy documents:*** The need to educate children and youths about issues related to equality, diversity and mainstreaming need to first be recognised at policy level. It is thus important for NCPE to lobby with the Ministry of Education such that this need is reflected in education policy documents;
- ***NCPE should encourage more the integration of issues related to equality, diversity and mainstreaming within the current subject curriculum;*** NCPE should embark on a campaign through which it encourages teachers and other educators to integrate these issues within their subject content. All teachers should feel responsible for promoting such attitudes such that there is whole school ownership;
- ***NCPE can lobby with the Faculty of Education to include credits on pedagogical approaches for teaching about equality, diversity and mainstreaming in both the primary and secondary teacher-training courses;*** The training of teacher needs to start with pre-service training. While there are a number of credits related to issues of equality and diversity, there is much less attention on the pedagogical approaches that can be adopted in order to integrate such issues within their subject matter. This can be achieved only if the trainers provide time and space within their courses;
- ***NCPE needs to participate in initiatives which highlight its presence and role with education professionals as well as with students;*** NCPE should make efforts to gain more visibility within the education sector. This is very important as awareness of its presence and the work that it does at national level, educators will have the background knowledge needed to educate about such issues;
- ***NCPE should collaborate with other educational organisations in order to invest in the production of more teaching resources similar to the ones trialled in this study;*** There are a number of organisation which have educational initiatives promoting education

material in aspects related to NCPE's work. NCPE can collaborate and integrate initiatives with these other organisations such that efforts are not duplicated;

- ***NCPE can invest in collating a virtual library of existing educational material available on the internet within its website:*** NCPE can embark on projects and initiatives to produce more educational resources which can be used by teachers at work. While this is a good initiative, it also tends to be very costly. Alternatively, NCPE can research other existing educational material and make it accessible to teachers by providing a link to the relevant websites. This will provide teachers with the required additional resources which they need so much.

This pilot study has shown that integrating teaching about equality, diversity, and mainstreaming is possible and can be successful at both a content and skills' level. Hopefully, this pilot study can be used as a stepping stone for further work for the benefit of future generations.

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