

Tool: School in the World - Group Discussion Activity

Often, we think of school and the educational processes that occur in it as a separate world from the rest of society. However, often challenges that are occurring in society impact on how our schools are operating.

The recent migration of people around Europe has had a significant impact on schools across Europe. Teachers' attitudes to new pupils in class can be influenced by portrayals in the media and the rest of society's response to new families in the community.

Exploring these influences in group discussion can be challenging but worthwhile.

Activity:

Take a photo or article from a newspaper that demonstrates a significant issue facing society currently. Share this photo/article and allow everybody time to read and consider it and clearly set the ground rules for the discussion so that the discussion is undertaken with respect for others and confidentiality after the group have completed the task.

Allow each person a minute to articulate an immediate response.

Now pose a question such as:

- Do you think pupils will have views on this topic?
- Are pupils' views likely to be the same as teachers? Why?
- Where do pupils gather information to inform themselves about topics like this?
- Do you think there is a range of opinions between pupils in our school?