



**ombudsman**  
for children & young people

# What do you say?

Exploring children's rights with children

Junior & Senior Infants



# What do you say?

Exploring children's rights with children

'What do you say?' is an Ombudsman for Children's Office resource.



**www.oco.ie**

The original materials were edited by

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and written by a team of experienced teachers:

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The new activities in these resource materials were also written by **Anne-Marie Herron, Anne-Marie Kealy** and **Owen McCarthy**.

The OCO would like to acknowledge the important contributions made by Clíodhna Ní Ghiollagáin and Kate Mitchell to the development of these materials.

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## Preface

Dear Teacher,

I am delighted that you have decided to use these resource materials to learn more about some of the many issues that affect children and relate to children's rights.

My job, and statutory responsibility, is to promote the rights and welfare of children up to the age of eighteen and to ensure that in law, policy and practice their best interests are considered. People often ask me where children's rights are defined. There are two key reference points: the Constitution, which is the basic legal instrument in Ireland, and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, a set of internationally agreed human rights standards for children, ratified in Ireland in 1992.

In 2007, we carried out the 'Big Ballot', a project where 74,000 children voted on the key issues affecting them. 560 primary and post-primary schools, Youthreach Centres and Senior Traveller Training Centres throughout Ireland supported these children and young people to participate. It is the largest consultation with children in Ireland to date and, needless to say, could not have happened without the support and enthusiasm of teachers across the country.

Feedback on the project indicated that the principal benefits of participation for children included the opportunity to explore children's rights; to form and express opinions; and to learn about and take part in a democratic process. Teachers spoke very positively about their experience of using the resource materials and many have since requested further materials on children's rights.

The team of teachers who developed the original resource materials for primary schools agreed to work with us again on these materials. We appreciate the expertise and creativity of Owen McCarthy, Ann Marie Herron and Anne-Marie Kealy.

I know the significant role that teachers play in children's lives. Our own experience of participative work with children reminds us that, like all those working directly with children, we are learning every day.

I hope these materials will support your work and that you and the children you work with will find them not only educational but fun.

If you would like to find out more about the OCO and our work to promote the rights and welfare of children in Ireland, please visit our website - **[www.oco.ie](http://www.oco.ie)**

Many thanks,



Emily Logan, Ombudsman for Children  
2010

# Introduction

Welcome to *'What do you say?'* This resource consists of activities that explore issues relating to children's rights. It includes references to rights in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Constitution.

These activities were created by a group of practising teachers and have been developed to facilitate implementation of aspects of the curriculum.

The materials introduce the role and work of the Ombudsman for Children's Office and give children the opportunity to explore and discuss the following issues:

- **Having a voice and being heard**
- **Family and care**
- **Health and wealth**
- **Education**
- **Play, leisure and recreation**
- **Inclusion**

Exploration of these issues will need to be treated with sensitivity. Teachers will need to consider the particular situations and experiences of children they are working with and adapt material as required.

Drawing on the previous activities and open to adaptation by teachers, the final activity in this resource focuses on supporting children to make their voices heard and views known by organising and/or taking part in a ballot.

Participating in these activities will support children to develop a broad understanding of the importance of having a voice in matters affecting them.

**Constitution Article 40(6)(1)(i):**  
Citizens have the right to express their opinions freely.

**UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), Article 12:**  
Children have the right to have a say about things that affect them.

# How to use this resource

### CORE ACTIVITIES

This resource comprises a manual for teachers, which includes photocopiable activity sheets and an accompanying DVD, which provides a focus for several of the activities. This format aims to give children an opportunity to take part in enjoyable activities which develop their understanding of rights and citizenship.

The first activity introduces the Ombudsman for Children. The remaining activities examine issues relating to children's rights in ways that develop knowledge, skills and values associated with citizenship education. These issues provide a focus for the final ballot activity, an exercise in citizenship and an introduction to participation in a democratic process. We hope the activities will be interesting and fun for children.

### PARENTS

A letter for distribution to parents/guardians, from the Ombudsman for Children, accompanies this resource. To afford parents/guardians an opportunity to discuss the issues raised in the resource with their children, activity sheets have a space for a parent's/guardian's signature. Schools are also encouraged to send home the results of the ballot activity.

### SCHOOL CURRICULUM

The activities facilitate aspects of curriculum teaching and learning, in particular in the context of SPHE (see diagram opposite). The activities support children to explore and discuss the issues and content with reference to their own experiences. The use of story is a strong feature of the resource materials for primary schools, from the fairytale stories for Infant classes through to the case studies for Senior classes.

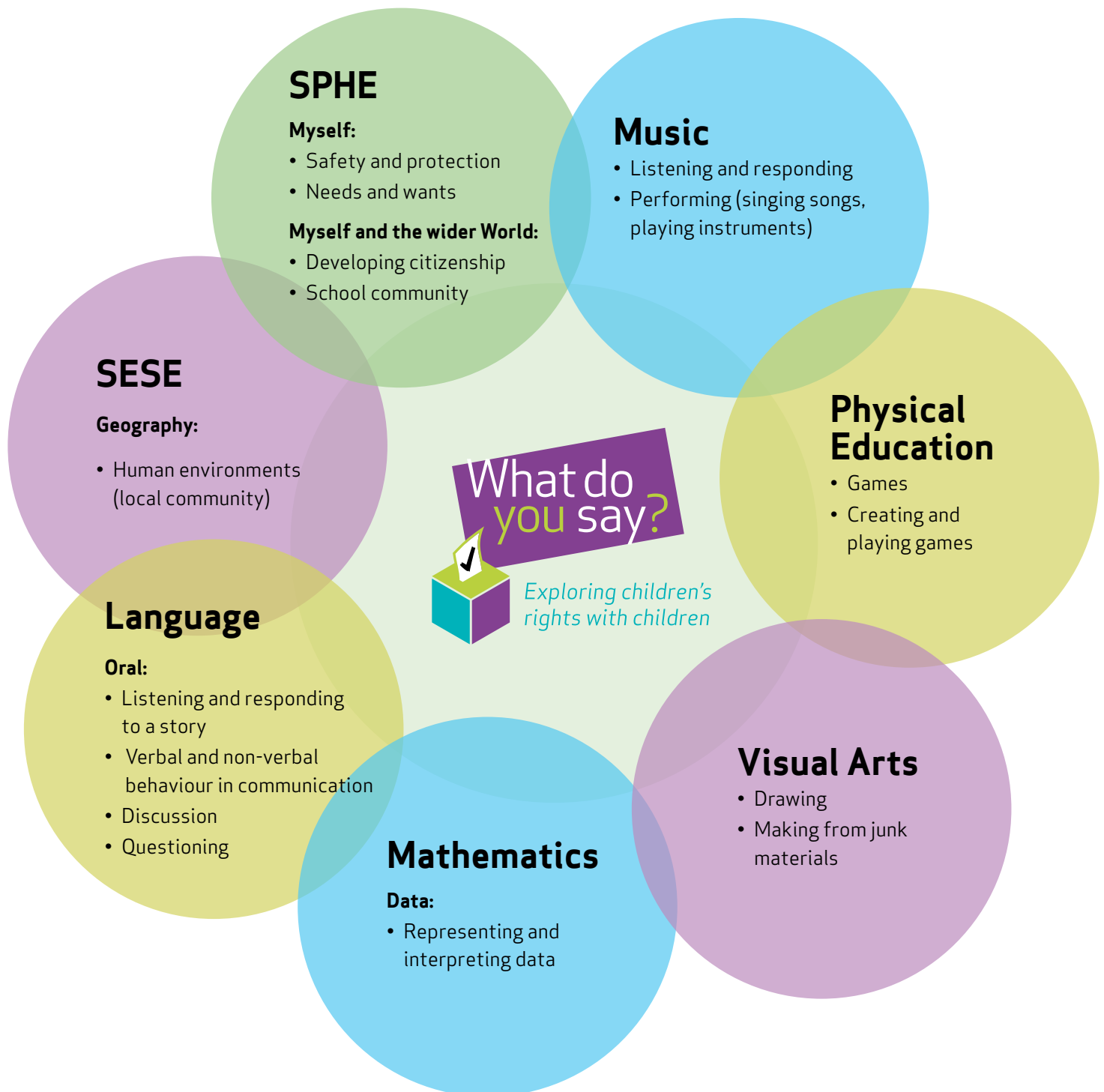
### NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

Although these materials have been developed for teaching and learning in the context of children's formal education, the activities can also be used for work with children in non-formal education settings - for example, as part of a programme of activity for children attending after school clubs.

### METHODOLOGIES

The teaching and learning methodologies involved in completing the activities include discussion, debate, group work and role play. They encourage children to develop empathy and to take part in co-operative learning. Teachers are encouraged to support children to work together in mixed ability groups. Home links are fostered through actions that encourage further discussion of the issues at home. Children should feel a real sense of ownership of the work they do in the context of each activity.

## How 'What do you say?' relates to the Curriculum for Junior and Senior Infant Classes



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### MISSING SOMETHING?

THE MATERIALS IN THIS PACK ARE AVAILABLE TO DOWNLOAD FROM OUR SITE [WWW.OCO.IE](http://WWW.OCO.IE)

### KEY TO ICONS



**DVD Scene**



**Writing  
Drawing**



**Class Discussion  
Read Aloud**



**Homelink**



*The work of the Ombudsman for Children*

# ACTIVITY 1

## Meet Emily Logan





## The work of the Ombudsman for Children

# Meet Emily Logan

In this activity, children are introduced to the Ombudsman for Children. They will learn that she has an important job to look after the interests of children living in Ireland.

### OBJECTIVE:

To introduce children to the work of the Ombudsman for Children.

**Ombudsman for Children:** The word Ombudsman comes from Scandinavia. The 'Ombuds' part means defender of rights and the 'man' part refers to mankind. So an Ombudsman can be either a man or a woman. S/he is a person who protects the rights of individuals or a group in relation to the powers and actions of government and other public organisations. In the case of an Ombudsman for Children, the beneficiaries of his/her work are children.

### YOU WILL NEED:

- Photo of the Ombudsman for Children
- DVD Track 1
- Photocopiable letter for parents guardians

### INTRODUCTION:

Lead a circle time discussion about different roles adults in the school community have - teachers, principal, caretaker, secretary, school warden, etc. Talk about the importance of these roles in relation to the children, their safety and well-being. With Senior Infants, the discussion could be broadened to include other adult roles in the community at large. Ask the children to give examples of jobs, which adults that they know do and/or have done in the past.

### DEVELOPMENT:

Introduce another person who has a very important job, which is about making Ireland a better and safer place for children. Show the children the photo of Emily Logan, the Ombudsman for Children, and discuss briefly. Play DVD Track 1 **or** read out the text of Emily's letter to the children. *(Please note that DVD Track 1 is not the same as the text of Emily's letter.)*



# Meet Emily Logan



Hi boys and girls,

My name is Emily and I want to tell you all about my very special job.

It may seem very, very strange to you but my job is to hear what children have to say about things that are important to them.

Before I got this job I worked as a children's nurse in Ireland and in a big children's hospital in England. I really liked taking care of children and spending time with them. I wanted to do more to make things better for children. And I wanted to do more to make sure children are heard.

Since I became Ombudsman for Children, I have met and heard from thousands of children all over Ireland. They have told me so many different things. Children have told me about where they live. They have talked to me about their families. They have told me about their friends and how much fun they have together. They have talked to me about the places they like to play and their favourite games. They have told me about all the things they like to learn in school and all the things they like to do in their holidays. Children have told me what makes them happy and what makes them sad. What makes them scared and what makes them laugh out loud. They have told me about their wishes and what would make things better for them and the people they love and care about most.

I have learned so much from hearing what children have to say. You know something: listening is very important. We all need to listen to each other. You can practise talking and listening with your teacher.

Thank you very much for listening to me today.

Goodbye for now,

*Emily Logan*

Ask the children questions to gauge their understanding of Emily's letter or, alternatively, of DVD Track 1.

## Possible questions based on DVD Track 1:

- What is Emily's job called?
- What is Emily's job about?
- Can you remember some of the things children in the film talk about?
- What does Emily think is important?



## Possible questions based on Emily's letter:

- Who is this letter from?
- What is Emily's job?
- Why did Emily want this job?
- Who has Emily met since she started her job as Ombudsman for Children?
- What have children told Emily about?
- What does Emily think is important?



## FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITY 1:

Ask the children to draw or paint pictures of Emily listening to children. Display the pictures with Emily's message 'I want to hear what you have to say'.



## HOME LINK:

Give the children a photocopy of Emily's letter to parents/guardians, which introduces them to the Ombudsman for Children's Office.



*Dear Parent or Guardian*

*I am writing to you because your child is learning about our work at the Ombudsman for Children's Office in school.*

*As you may know, as Ireland's first Ombudsman for Children, my job is to promote the rights and welfare of all children up to the age of 18.*

*In my role as Ombudsman for Children, I have a statutory obligation to raise awareness of issues relating to children's rights and welfare, including among children and young people.*

*In collaboration with experienced teachers, we developed a set of educational activities so that children can learn in school about what we do and explore topics that are relevant to children's lives in Ireland.*

*These activities originally belonged to a project called the Big Ballot, which our Office did in 2007. Hundreds of schools and almost 75,000 children and young people throughout Ireland took part in this project. Its purpose was to give children an opportunity to tell us what issues are most important to them and, with that, to help our Office decide what issues to work on.*

*Hearing children's views, highlighting their concerns, and supporting children's participation in decisions that affect them are central to our work here at the Ombudsman for Children's Office.*

*We continue to learn a great deal from the opinions and ideas that children and young people share with us. We are very aware of the extent to which parents and professionals support children and young people to find out about, contact and engage with our Office. This support is something that we all really value and appreciate.*

*If you would like to know more about the work of our Office, please visit our website [www.oco.ie](http://www.oco.ie), email us at [oco@oco.ie](mailto:oco@oco.ie) or phone us on 01-8656800 to request an information pack.*

*Many thanks,*



Emily Logan

Ombudsman for Children



*Having a voice and being heard*

## ACTIVITY 2

# ‘Listen Up Farmer Joe’







## Having a voice and being heard

# ‘Listen Up Farmer Joe’

In this lesson children learn that, when they have something to say, it is important that they are heard. Sometimes another person can help a child to be heard. Adults, and children themselves, have a role in supporting children to be heard.

### OBJECTIVE:

To introduce children to the idea that it's important that children are heard.

**Constitution Article 40 (6)(1)(i):**  
Citizens have the right to express their opinions freely.

**UNCRC, Article 12:**  
Children have the right to have a say about things that affect them.

### YOU WILL NEED:

- Story poster to accompany the text
- DVD Track 5 or the text of the story
- Photocopiable activity sheets 1 and 2

### INTRODUCTION:

Refer back to Activity 1 and Emily's description of her job as being all about hearing what children have to say. Explain that his story is about someone who didn't listen at all to the voices all around him. Show the children the poster for the story 'Listen up Farmer Joe'.

### DEVELOPMENT:

Show the story on DVD Track 5 **or** read the story to the class. Encourage the children to join in with repeating the sounds.



# Listen Up Farmer Joe



**Once upon a time there was a farmer whose name was Joe. Joe was a very good farmer and he looked after his animals very well. He made sure that they all had enough to eat and drink. He made sure that the cows were milked and that the ducks had a nice little pond to swim in. He made sure that the sheep and horses had plenty of space to run about. Joe liked his animals and they liked him.**

But there was one problem. Joe didn't listen to the animals. Oh yes, he heard them making their funny noises but he didn't really listen to what they were saying. And mostly the animals didn't mind that Joe wasn't listening. They just enjoyed their life on the farm.

But one night there was a terrible storm. The wind howled all night long and the rain lashed onto the roof. The old red barn where the animals slept began to shake and the roof rattled and groaned and creaked. It was very scary. The animals were terrified. They were afraid that the whole barn would fall down and the roof would topple in on top of them. The old red barn was just not safe any more.

The next morning, as soon as the sun was up, they decided that they would have to do something about it. They would tell Farmer Joe about the shaking and the rattling and the groaning and creaking. They would tell him that the barn was dangerous and that they couldn't stay there any more. And they would tell him immediately.

But Farmer Joe was going around the farm whistling and singing and doing his jobs as usual. He never looked up and he never noticed the broken roof. All the animals tried to tell him about the barn in their own different ways.

*'Oink Oink,'* said the pigs.

*'Baa Baa,'* said the sheep.

*'Quack Quack,'* said the ducks.

*'Neigh Neigh,'* said the horses.

*'Moo Moo,'* said the cows.

*'Cock a doodle doo,'* said the big red rooster.

*'Cheep cheep cheep,'* said the little yellow chickens.

But Farmer Joe wasn't listening. Oh yes he heard their funny noises and he smiled.

*'My goodness, those animals are noisy today'* he said, and he got on with his work.

When he had finished, he sat down in the sunshine to have a little nap. The animals gathered round. *'We must make him listen,'* said one of the pigs. *'We have to find a way,'* said one of the sheep. *'Perhaps if we all tell him together he will listen to us'* said the big red rooster.



And so all the animals gathered round Farmer Joe and all at once they started to tell him about the barn.

'Oink Oink,' said the pigs.

'Baa Baa,' said the sheep.

'Quack Quack,' said the ducks.

'Neigh Neigh,' said the horses.

'Moo Moo,' said the cows.

'Cock a doodle doo,' said the big red rooster

'Cheep cheep cheep,' said the little yellow chickens.

But it was no use. Farmer Joe wasn't listening. He opened his eyes. 'Cut out that racket' he said to the animals. 'Can't you see I'm trying to have a nap?' And he dozed off again in the lovely sunshine.

The animals were getting very worried. They couldn't spend another night in that creaking old barn. It was just too dangerous. But how could they get Farmer Joe to listen?

Just then, they heard the school bell ringing and the children began to come up the road on their way home from the village school. The children often stopped to talk to the animals as they went past. 'Now is our chance,' said the big red rooster, we will tell the children about the barn.'

The children came up to the farm gate to say 'hello'. All at once the animals told them their story.

'Oink Oink,' said the pigs.

'Baa Baa,' said the sheep.

'Quack Quack,' said the ducks.

'Neigh Neigh,' said the horses.

'Moo Moo,' said the cows.

'Cock a doodle doo,' said the big red rooster.

'Cheep cheep cheep,' said the little yellow chickens.

The children listened. They didn't really understand what the animals were saying but they knew there was something wrong. Just then, Serena, one of the children, looked up. 'Look,' she said in her whispery voice, 'the old barn is creaking and swaying. It looks like it might fall down. We had better tell Farmer Joe.'



The children ran into the farmyard. Lisa was calling and shouting as they went.

*'Listen up Farmer Joe. Listen Up,'* she said.

Farmer Joe woke up when he heard Lisa's loud voice. *'Well, well, well,'* he said, *'what's all the fuss about?'*

The children gathered round.

*'It's the barn, Farmer Joe,'* said Lisa in her big loud voice.

*'It's creaking and groaning,'* said Jake with a giggle.

*'It's going to fall down,'* said Serena in a whisper.

*'And hurt your animals'* said Tom with a gasp.

*'Oh no!'* said Farmer Joe, *'not the barn, the old red barn! My poor animals will have nowhere to sleep. I will have to get it fixed straightaway. Why didn't someone tell me before now?'* he asked.

The animals laughed. That's just what they had been trying to do. It's just that, as usual, Farmer Joe had not been listening. They looked at the children and said a big thank you.

*'Oink Oink,'* said the pigs.

*'Baa Baa,'* said the sheep.

*'Quack Quack,'* said the ducks.

*'Neigh Neigh,'* said the horses.

*'Moo Moo,'* said the cows.

*'Cock a doodle doo,'* said the big red rooster.

*'Cheep cheep cheep,'* said the little yellow chickens.

The children said goodbye and ran home and they told their mums and dads the story of Farmer Joe's barn. Lisa told it in a big loud voice, Jake told it with a giggle, Serena told it in a whisper and Tom told it with a gasp. The mums and dads all laughed. *'That Farmer Joe,'* they said. *'He will just have to learn to listen up!'*





Ask the children questions to extend their thinking. Here are some possible questions:

- What animals were on the farm?
- What noises did the pigs/sheep/cows etc. make?
- What jobs did Farmer Joe do around the farm?
- Was he a good farmer?  
How do you know?
- Why did he not listen to the animals?
- What were they trying to tell him?
- Why did they need to tell him?
- Why did he listen to the children?
- Did all the children sound the same?
- What did the children do that the animals could not?
- Did the children all speak together?  
Why?

### **FOLLOW- UP ACTIVITY 1:**

Ask the children to sit in a circle for talking and listening.

### **Discuss the fact that:**

- animals make different sounds;
- humans speak in different ways, i.e. in different languages and different tones of voice.

### **Discuss:**

- the difficulties of all talking together;
- ways we can all be heard;
- putting your hand up;
- calling other people by their names;
- taking turns to talk.

### *Round 1:*

Children pass a baton (wand) around the circle. As each child receives the baton, he/she says 'hello'.

### *Subsequent rounds:*

Experiment with different tones of voice. For example, passing the baton as before, each child says 'hello' ( or their name) in a loud voice/ in a whisper/ in a sing song voice/ in a baby voice/ in a giant's voice, etc. With Senior Infants more complicated phrases can be used.

Discuss the method used. Why is it fair? How does it give everyone a chance to talk?



## FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITY 2:

Ask the children to sit in a circle for talking and listening.

Lead a discussion about things we might need to say with our voices, giving possible scenarios.

Ask the children to suggest what they might say in the situation.

Ask the children to complete the sentences:

- When I am tired I say.....
- When I am hungry I say.....
- When I am lonely I say....
- When I am frightened I say....
- When my friend is mean to me I say...
- When I am angry I say.....
- When I am happy I say.....
- When I need a hug I say.....



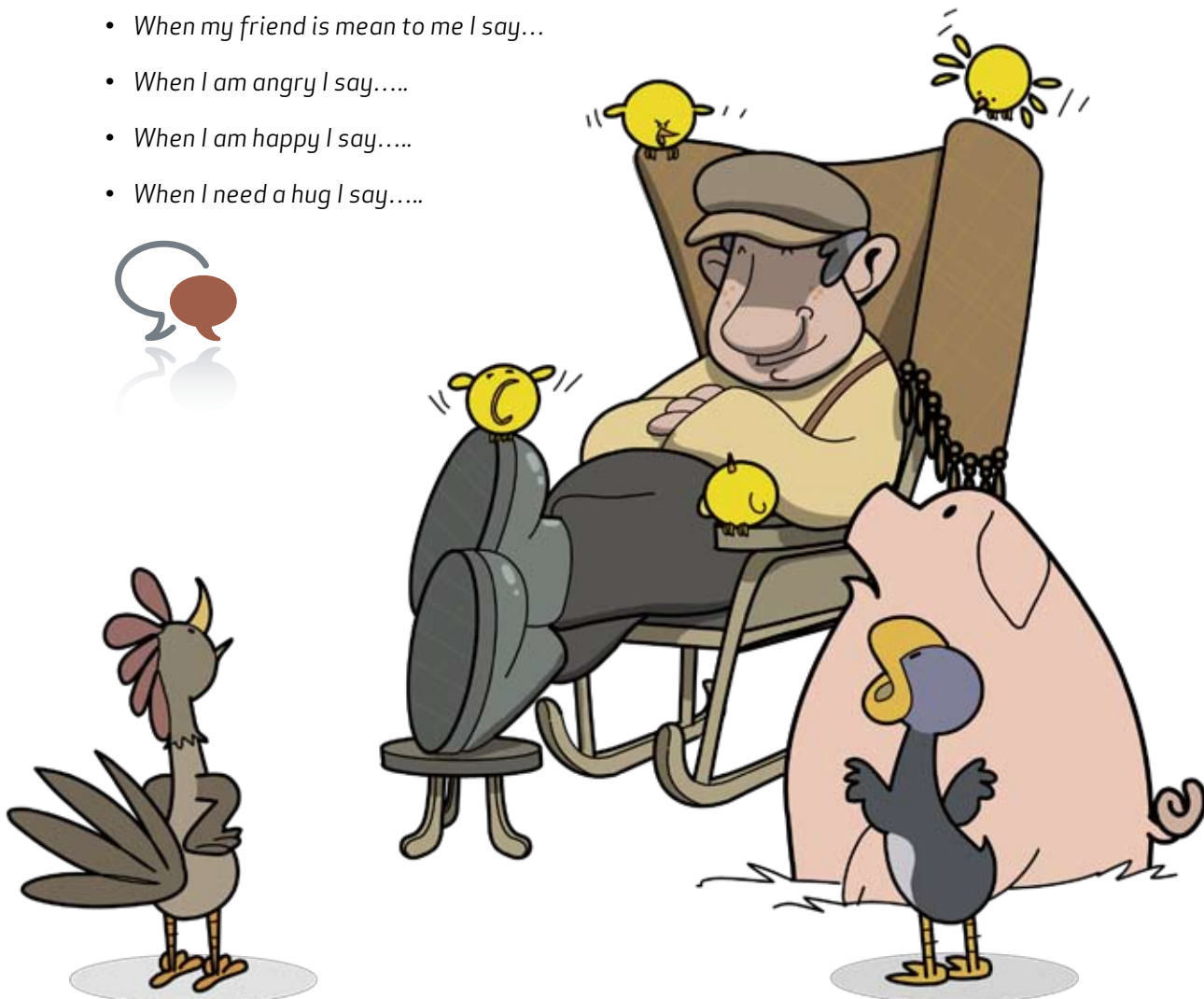
## FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITY 3:

Ask the children to colour activity sheet 1. Senior Infants could also draw their favourite farm animal and write the appropriate animal noise in a speech bubble on activity sheet 2.



## HOME LINK:

Ask the children to bring home the colouring sheet and tell their parents/guardians/siblings the story about Farmer Joe. Suggest that they can tell it in their own special voice.



# Listen Up Farmer Joe

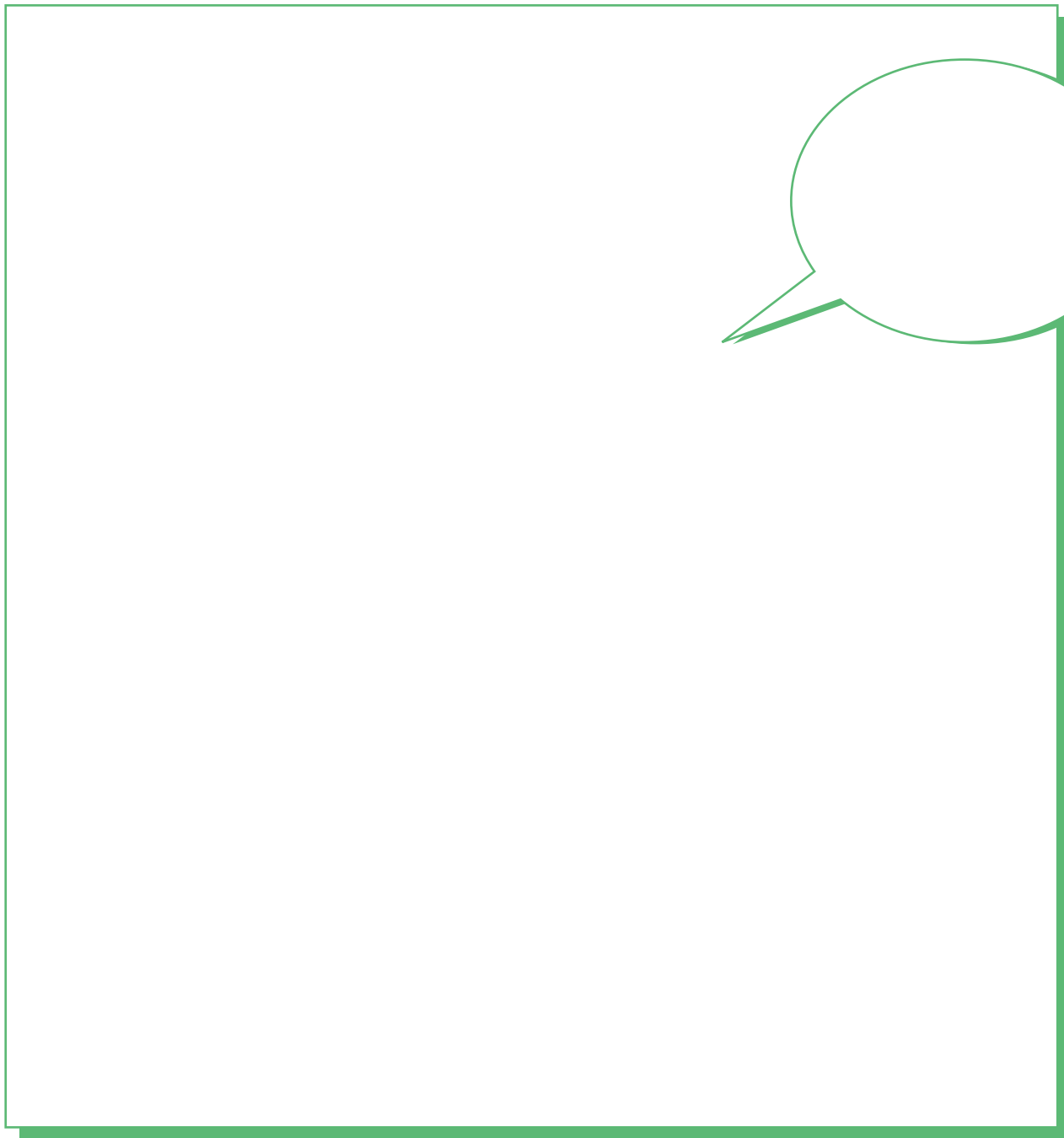
Colour Sheet 1



In class, your child has explored the importance of speaking out and being heard. Ask your child to tell you the story of Farmer Joe. Make sure you show him/her that you are listening.

Parent's/Guardian's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Children in Senior Infants: **Please draw your favourite farm animal.**



Your child has learned the importance of speaking out and being heard. Ask your child to tell you the story of Farmer Joe. Make sure that you show him/her that you are listening.

Parent's/Guardian's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



## ACTIVITY 3

# Hannah goes to school





## Education and Play

# Hannah goes to school

In this lesson children are asked to imagine life without school or play and to consider how both education and play are central to their lives

**OBJECTIVE:**

To introduce children to their rights to education and play

**Constitution, Article 42:**

The State recognises the right to education.

**UNCRC, Article 28:**

Children have the right to education.

**Article 31:**

Children have the right to play and rest.

**YOU WILL NEED:**

- Poster that accompanies the story
- Story on DVD Track 6 or the text of the story
- Paper for drawing

**INTRODUCTION:**

Discuss the children's memories of their first day at school.

**DEVELOPMENT:**

Listen to the story with the children on DVD Track 6 or read the story to the children.



# Hannah goes to school



**Hannah was five and her mum told her that soon she would be going to school like all the other children who lived on her road. The school was just around the corner and Hannah had passed it lots of times on her way back from the shops with her mum and dad.**

But Hannah didn't like the school. It was a huge building and it had a big blue door with steps leading up to it. She didn't like the noise of the school bell and she didn't like the shrieking and shouting of the children playing in the playground. School was a big scary place and Hannah didn't like it at all. 'I don't like school,' she said to her mum. 'I don't like the big blue door. I don't like the big scary playground and I don't like all the noisy children. I'm not going to school' said Hannah. 'School is big and noisy and scary and I'm not going!'

'Oh' said Hannah's mum, 'that's a pity because Mrs. Smyth is expecting you to be in her class this year. We'll have to go and explain to her that you're not going to school. The other children are going in on Tuesday to meet their teacher so that would be a good time for us to go.'

On Tuesday, Hannah and her mum went to the school to tell Mrs. Smyth that Hannah would not be going to school. Hannah held her mum's hand tightly as they went up the steps and through the big blue door. Hannah got a big surprise. Inside, the school was not scary at all. There were bright pictures on the walls and funny squiggly things hanging from the ceiling. Mrs. Smyth noticed Hannah and her mum and came over to them. Mum explained that Hannah would not be coming to school after all. Mrs. Smyth looked very disappointed. 'Oh Hannah, that's a pity. I was hoping we would have good fun in my class. I will miss you and so will all the children. Maybe you should come just into the classroom and say hello to them anyway. I can explain to them later.'

So Hannah held her mum's hand even more tightly than before and they went into Mrs. Smyth's classroom. Hannah saw all her friends. Jenny was playing with the sand. Conor was drawing a picture. Sarah was building a long road with bricks. Sally was painting a picture of her house and Josh was making a snake with beads on a string. They were having good fun.



*'Hi Hannah,' said Jenny, 'do you want to play with the sand? We could make a castle together.'* Hannah let go of her mum's hand and went over to the sand tray. She liked the feel of the soft, silky sand running between her fingers. Then she and Jenny made a beautiful, tall castle and decorated it with shells.

Soon the bell went and they were allowed outside to play for a few minutes. Hannah didn't want to go into the big scary playground but she followed Jenny. And then she got another surprise. The playground was not as big and scary and noisy as she had thought. There were children playing all sorts of games. Hannah and Jenny joined in the fun. They jumped on the hopscotch and they ran around the little painted paths and stepped on the painted footsteps. They had a great time. Soon the bell rang again and it was time to go. Hannah didn't think the bell was noisy at all. In fact, she liked its nice, tinkling sound.

*'We have to go now,' said Hannah's mum. 'You had better tell Jenny that you won't be coming to school any more.'*

Then Hannah pulled at her mum's coat. *'There's something I want to tell you'* she said. Mum bent down and Hannah whispered in her ear. *'I like the school now,'* she said softly. *'It's big but it's not noisy and it's not scary. I want to go to school now.'*

*'Oh,'* said Mum. *'We'll have to tell Mrs. Smyth that you've changed your mind. I hope it will be okay.'* Mrs. Smyth smiled. *'That's wonderful Hannah'* she said, *'we will have great fun together.'*

... And you know: they really did.

And now, every morning when Hannah runs up the steps and in through the big blue door and meets her friends in Mrs. Smyth's classroom, she says in a big loud voice: *'I love my school.'* And Mrs. Smyth smiles.



# Hannah goes to school

Discuss the story with the children to explore and extend their thinking about the benefits and importance of school and education. Here are some possible questions:

- Why did Hannah not want to go to school?
- Why was she scared?
- What did her mum say they must do?
- What surprises did Hannah get at school?
- What games did she play?
- Who did she meet?
- Why did Hannah change her mind about school?
- How did she tell her mum that she had changed her mind?
- If Hannah did not go to school what would happen?
- Why do you think it is good for Hannah to go to school?

## FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITY 1:

- Discuss the various activities the children take part in in school.
- Find out which activity they would miss most if they couldn't do it.
- Ask the children to draw pictures of themselves doing their favourite activity.
- Ask the children to discuss their drawings in pairs. Give them a format for discussion, for example:  
*My favourite activity in school is ... because ...*

Follow up with a class activity. Ask the children to stand in a circle and hold up their drawings. In turn, each child shows their drawing to the class group and names their favourite activity.

## HOME LINK

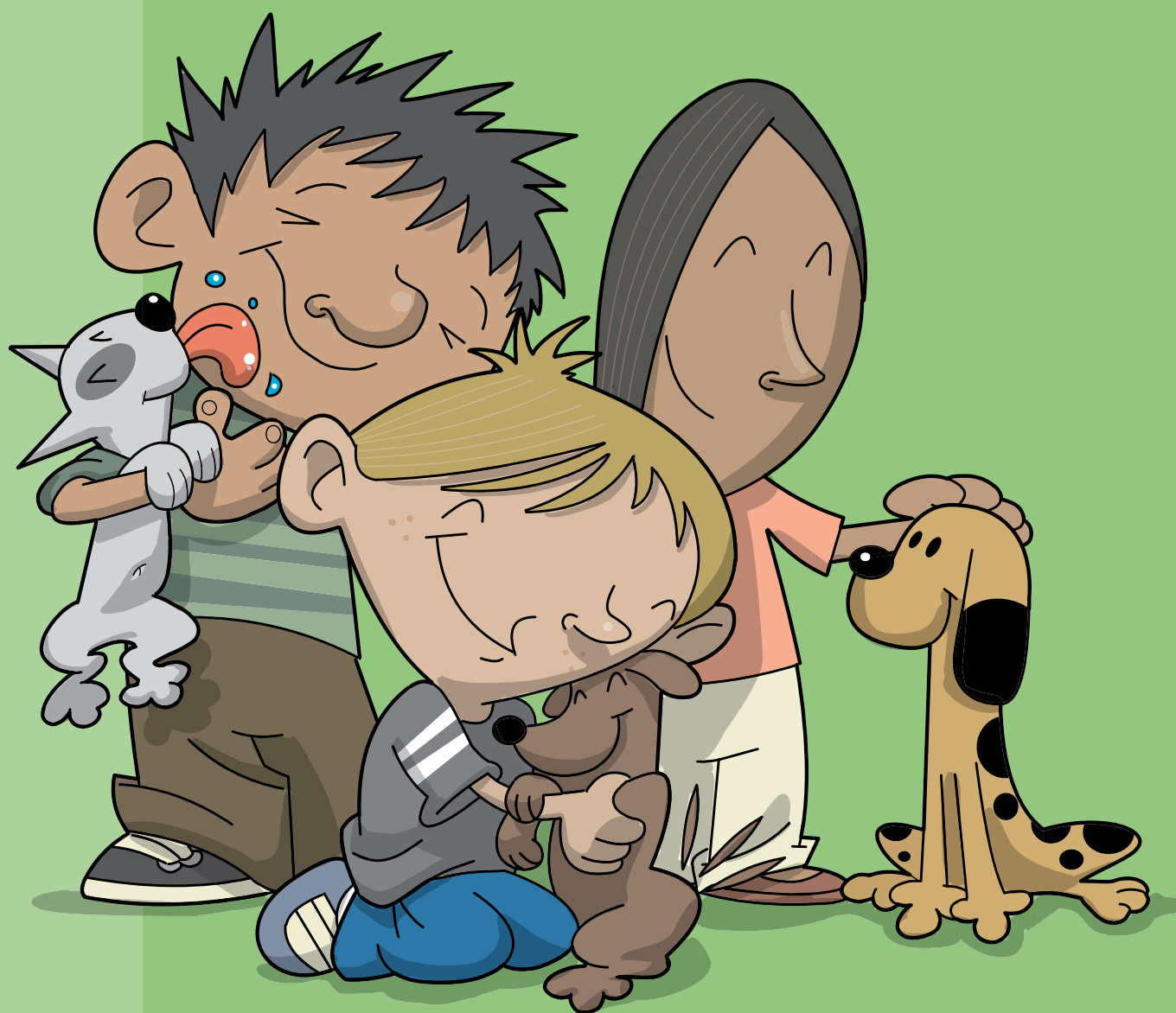
Ask the children to bring home their drawings and to tell their parents/guardians their favourite thing about school.



*Family and Care, Health and Wealth*

## ACTIVITY 4

# Puppy Love







# Family and Care, Health and Wealth

## Puppy Love

In this lesson, children can explore how children, like the animals in the story, need to be cared for in an appropriate way in order to be healthy and safe.

### OBJECTIVE:

To develop children's awareness of the need for a good family environment where due care and protection is given to all children.

### Constitution, Article 41:

The family has a special place in society.

### UNCRC, Articles 7 and 9:

Children have the right to be with their parents or those who can care for them best.

### Articles 24 and 27:

Children have a right to the best health care possible, safe water to drink, nutritious food, clothes, a clean and safe place to live, and to information to help them stay well.

### YOU WILL NEED:

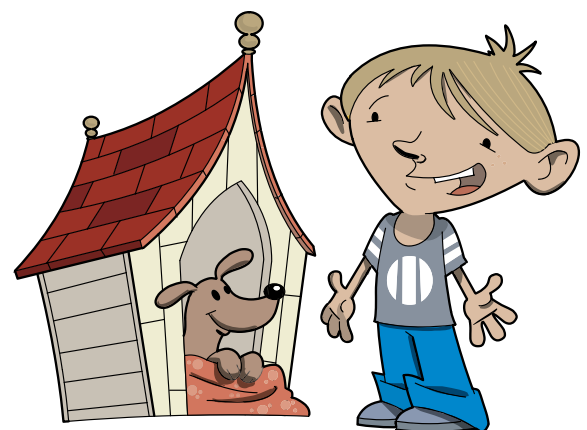
- Story on DVD Track 7 or the text of the story
- Activity sheet 3

### INTRODUCTION:

Discuss things we need to stay alive and well. For example, what do babies need? What do children need? What do animals need?

### DEVELOPMENT:

Listen to and watch the story on DVD Track 7 or read the story to the children.



# Puppy Love



**Once upon a time there were three friends called Percy and Susie and Fred who all decided that they would like to have a little pet for themselves. So Percy and Susie and Fred went to the pet shop and saw three adorable little puppies in the window.**

*'That's just the one for me,' said Percy, choosing a little, white puppy with a patch of brown over one eye. 'I will call him Patch,' he said.*

*'And that's the one for me,' said Susie, choosing a little puppy with a black spot on his ear. 'I will call him Spot,' she said.*

*'And that's just the one for me,' said Fred, choosing a frisky little puppy with a waggly tail. 'I will call him Frisky,' he said.*

So Percy and Susie and Fred brought their new pets home and helped them to settle in.

First the puppies needed somewhere to sleep.

Percy made a huge shed for Patch and put an enormous blanket inside. Susie found a broken old box for Spot and put a torn and ragged blanket inside. Fred got a cosy kennel for Frisky and put a warm, snug blanket inside.

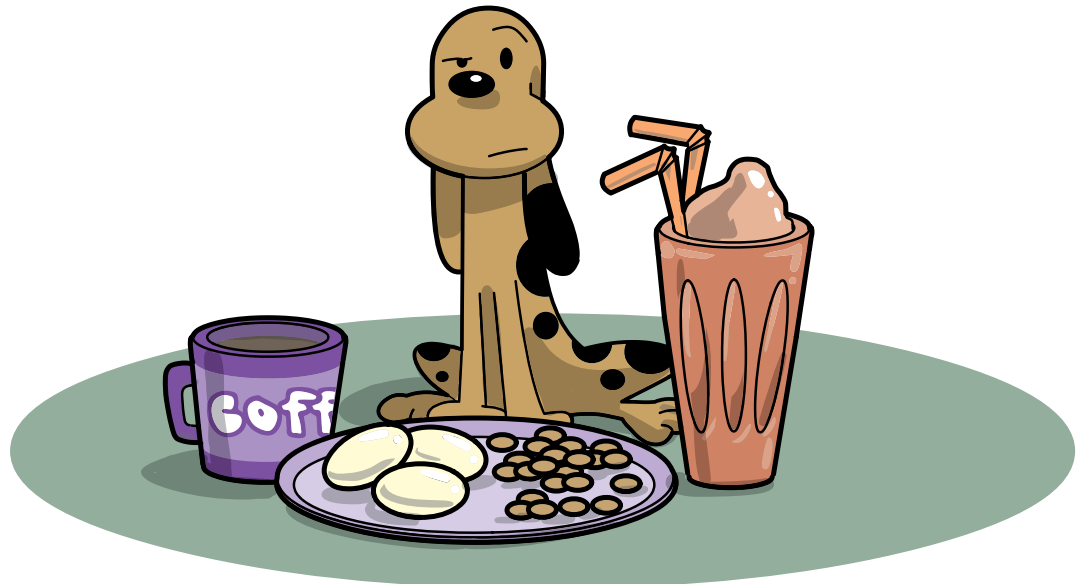
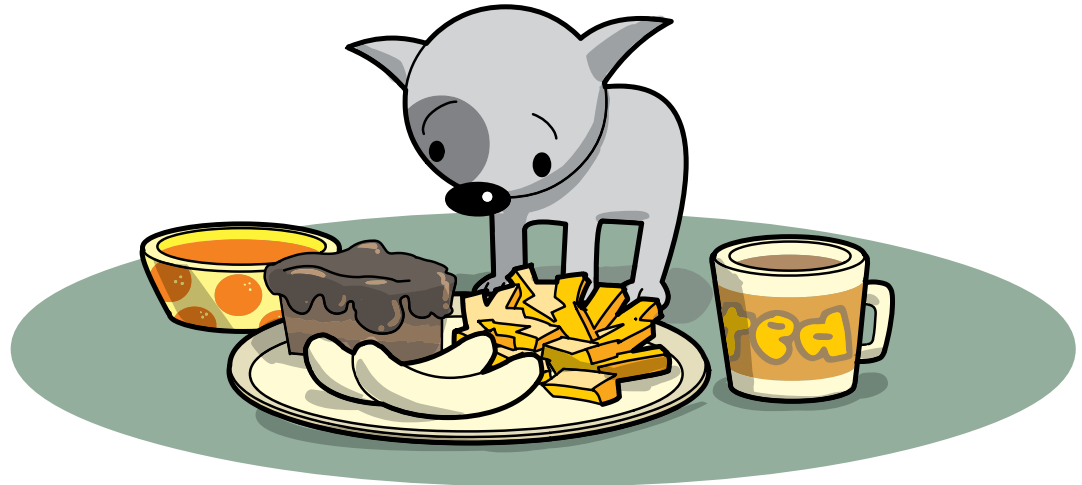
The puppies needed food to eat and something to drink.

Percy bought lots of chocolate cake and chips and bananas for Patch. He gave him orange juice and tea to drink.

Susie bought peanuts and eggs for Spot. She gave him milkshakes and coffee to drink.

Fred bought puppy food in tins and special dog biscuits for Frisky. He left nice fresh water in his bowl to drink.

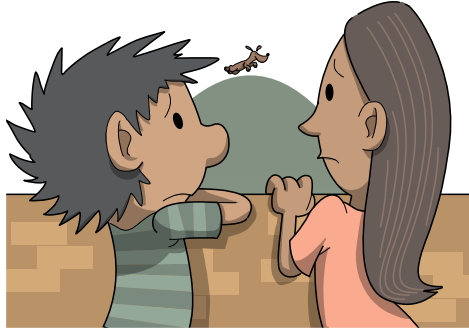




The puppies needed to play too. Percy gave Patch a teddy and a drum and told him to play out on the street. Susie gave Spot a piece of string and told him to play in his box. Fred brought Frisky to the park and they had great fun playing 'fetch' with a nice soft ball.

One day Percy and Susie and Fred were out walking their dogs and they met on the street. They began to talk about their pets. 'I'm worried,' said Percy. 'Patch is not happy. He is lazy and he sits around all day.'





*'I'm worried too' said Susie. 'Spot is not happy either. He won't eat and he won't play.'*

*'I'm not worried at all,' said Fred. 'Frisky is very happy. He eats well. He sleeps all night and he plays all day.' And Frisky wiggled his waggly tail and showed how happy he was.*

Percy and Susie went home and they thought about Fred and Frisky. They wondered why Frisky was so happy. They wondered why Patch and Spot were not happy. They decided to peep over the wall into Fred's garden. They saw the lovely cosy kennel. They saw the puppy food in the dish, the fresh water in the bowl and they saw Fred playing 'fetch' with Frisky who was darting around the garden in every direction.

*'Oops,' said Percy, 'I think I didn't look after Patch very well.' 'And I didn't look after Spot very well,' said Susie. 'But I will now,' said Percy. 'And I will too,' said Susie.*



And they did. They got nice cosy kennels with warm snug blankets for Patch and Spot. They got puppy food in tins and special dog biscuits and gave them fresh water. And they went to the park every day and had great fun playing 'fetch' with a nice soft ball.

And now when Percy and Susie and Fred meet in the park nobody is worried because Patch and Spot and Frisky are all happy wiggling their waggly tails.



# Puppy Love



Discuss the story with the children to develop their understanding. Here are some possible questions:

- What pet did Percy/ Susie/Fred choose?
- Why did they give them the names that they did?
- How did Percy look after Patch?
- Did Patch get what he needed?
- How did Susie look after Spot?
- Did Spot get what he needed?
- How did Fred look after Frisky?
- Did Frisky get what he needed?
- Who took best care of their pet?
- What did Percy and Susie learn?
- Why are all three puppies wagging their tails now?

## **FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITY 1:**

Ask the children to colour in the things on activity sheet 3, which they think a puppy needs.



## **FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITY 2:**

Following a discussion, ask the children to draw items, which they think they need to be safe and well, e.g. food, water, a home, clothes, people to care for them, a bed.

## **HOME LINK:**

Ask the children to bring home their completed activity sheet and to discuss their work with their parents/guardians.





# Puppy Love



Discuss with your child who and what children need to be healthy, safe and happy.

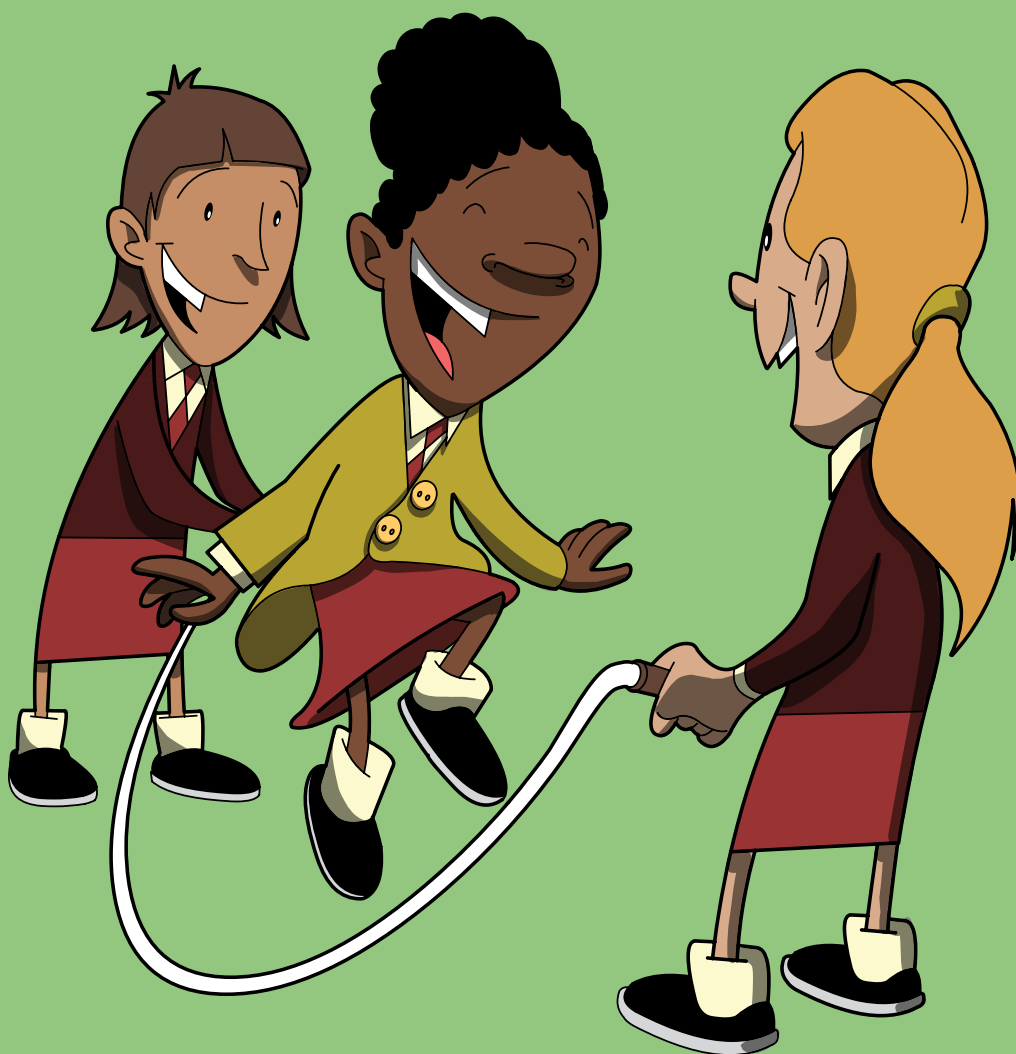
Parent's/Guardian's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



*Inclusion*

# ACTIVITY 5

## *The Bell*





## Inclusion

# The Bell

In this activity, children explore the right of all children to be included and respected.

### OBJECTIVE:

To demonstrate that inclusion can be achieved in the school context in practical ways.

#### **Constitution, Article 40:**

All citizens shall, as human persons, be held equal before the law.

#### **UNCRC, Article 2:**

All children have the same rights, no matter who they are, where they live, what their parents do, what language they speak, what their religion is, whether they are a boy or a girl, what their culture is, whether or not they have a disability, whether they are rich or poor. No child should be treated unfairly on any basis

### YOU WILL NEED:

- Text of the story
- Activity sheet 4
- Words of circle type games to teach to the children (children in older classes may know local games)
- **Optional** - Percussion instruments to accompany the *Just Join In* song:
  - junk materials to make percussion instruments, e.g. shakers made with plastic bottles containing cereals or beans; wooden blocks to beat together; drums made from plastic or metal containers
  - or actual percussion instruments, e.g. tambourines, triangles, wood blocks and beaters, maracas, sleigh bells, jingle sticks

### INTRODUCTION:

Read out the story *The Bell* to the children.



# The Bell

**Briiiiiiiiiing** (*Sound of a bell ringing*)

**Oh no, thought Eva. It's yard time again. I wish I didn't have to go to the yard! But the children were already lining up, jumping up and down and rushing to get out the door so that they could play. Eva slowly went to the rack and got her coat and slowly, slowly put it on. She even tried to close all the buttons. Miss Burton noticed and wanted Eva to hurry up. 'You will miss your playtime, Eva,' she said.**

Miss Burton didn't know that that was just what Eva wanted to do. She didn't want to go out to the yard. Nobody would play with her out there anyway. But she got into the line and went out with the others. You see, Eva had only started in the school two days before. She had moved from a school in a country far away. This school was different to her old one. She didn't know the other children here and she didn't speak their language. She didn't know their names and she didn't know the games they played. When she went to the yard she just watched them. They all looked so happy and she felt so sad.



Eva stood and watched the children who were skipping. They sang funny songs that she didn't know the words of. So she wandered off on her own.

Then she stopped to watch a clapping game. But the children spoke so quickly that she didn't understand what they were saying. So she walked away.

She noticed some children who were swapping cards and she sat down beside them. But she didn't know what the cards were about. So she ran off.

She ran after some girls who were playing a chasing game. They said something to her, but she wasn't sure if they wanted her to join in or not. Soon they disappeared into the crowd.

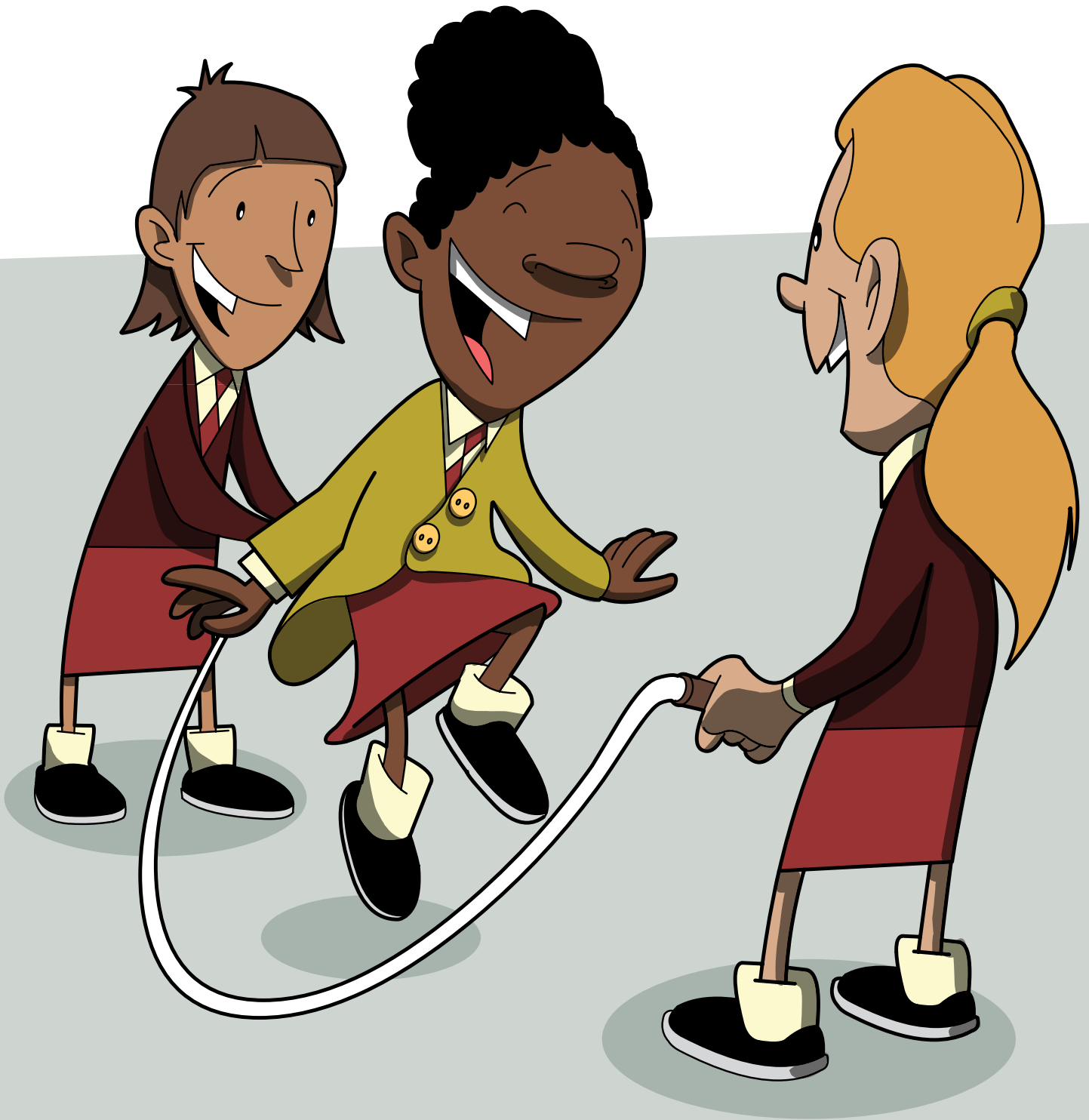
Briiiiiiiiiing! Oh yes! thought Eva. At last the bell! Thank goodness playtime was over for another day. But she would have to go to the yard again tomorrow. When she went home she told her mum in her own language about her problem in the yard. Eva's mum listened and said that she would explain to the teacher the next day. Miss Burton was very sorry to hear that Eva was sad at playtime. She would have to do something to help her join in the games. It just wasn't right that she wasn't being included in all the fun in the yard.



That day, just before yard time, Miss Burton had a chat with the class about playing together. She wondered why Eva was not included in the games. The children told her that Eva didn't know the words of their games. She didn't know the skipping games, the clapping games, the card games or even the chasing games. Miss Burton explained that if they spoke slowly or if they smiled and showed Eva how to play the games, then she would understand. The children listened to their teacher and said that they would help Eva. And they did! That day in the yard they smiled at Eva and held her hand and showed her how to join in. Eva still didn't know the words, but she tried her best and copied what the other children did. And she found out that many of the games were like ones she played in her own country. They just sounded different.

From that day on, Mrs. Burton had a 'special games time' every day. She played circle games with the class. You probably know those games too, the ones where everyone makes a big circle, joins hands and sings songs. Soon Eva was singing with everyone else. She loved the part in Ring a ring a Rosie when everyone fell down. She liked being tapped on the shoulders when they played In and out go the dusky bluebells. She enjoyed going chop, chop in London bridge is falling down and best of all, she was happy putting her arms up to be a tree in There was a princess long ago.

Very soon Eva knew not just the circle games but all the other games in the yard too. She taught the children some of her games that they did not know before. Now when Eva hears that Briiiiiiiiing sound for yard time, she runs to the line, jumps up and down with everyone else and rushes to get out to play. It feels nice to be included!



**DEVELOPMENT:**

Discuss the story with the class.  
Here are some possible questions:

- Why did Eva not like the sound of the bell for playtime?
- Why do we have playtime in school?
- Why did Eva not join in the games?
- How do you think she felt?
- What did she do to get help?
- Who helped her to be included in the games?
- What did the children do to help Eva?
- What did she find out about the games?
- What games do you like to play in the yard?
- Have you ever felt left out?
- How did you get to join in again?
- What would you do to include someone in your games?

**FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITY 1**

Play a variety of circle games with the children. These could include the games, which feature in the story. Children may need to be taught the words of the games in advance or as they play. At the outset, emphasise the importance of inclusion in the games: everyone needs to be in the circle before the games can start.







## FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITY 2

Teach the children the song *Just Join In* to the tune of 'If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands!' 5 children in a circle begin the song. With each succeeding verse, 5 more children join in, until all of the children make a big circle. Percussion instruments can be used if feasible/desirable.

### Just Join In!

*If you're happy or you're sad, just join in,  
If you're lonely or you're glad, just join in,  
If you want to be our friend,  
We'll be with you to the end,  
Hold someone's hand and just join in.*

*If you're big or you're small, just join in  
If you're short or you're tall, just join in,  
If you want to be our friend,  
We'll be with you to the end,  
Hold someone's hand and just join in.*

*If you don't want to talk, just join in,  
If you want to run or walk just join in,  
If you want to be our friend,  
We'll be with you to the end,  
Hold someone's hand and just join in.*

*If you don't know the game just join in,  
If we don't know your name just join in,  
If you want to be our friend,  
We'll be with you to the end,  
Hold someone's hand and just join in.*

## HOME LINK

Give each child a copy of activity sheet 4 to complete. Ask the children to bring home their completed sheet and to talk about their work with their parent/guardian.



Please colour the things you like to play with.



Once your child has told you about his/her colouring and drawing, talk to him/her about including others (e.g. siblings, cousins, other children in the neighbourhood) in games.

Please draw a picture of you playing a game with your friends.



Parent's/Guardian's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



# ACTIVITY 6

## *New Shoes for Ben*





# New Shoes for Ben

This activity introduces children to An Garda Síochána and develops their awareness of the work gardaí do in the community, including in relation to children.

**OBJECTIVE:**

To develop children's awareness of An Garda Síochána and its work in the community, including in relation to children

**Note for teachers:**

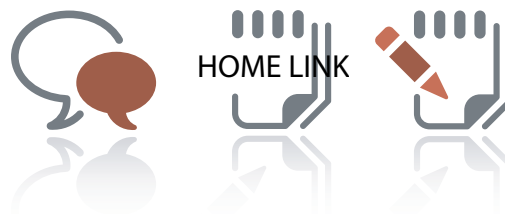
Research on obstacles to children realising their rights conducted for the OCO by University College Cork in 2007 indicated that children who come into conflict with the law and become involved in the criminal justice system are among several groups of children in Ireland who face multiple obstacles as regards realising their rights. For this reason, we decided to develop an activity that would enable younger children to engage with the theme of 'children and the law' in an age-appropriate way, i.e. by looking at the work of community gardaí.

**YOU WILL NEED:**

- Activity sheet 5

**INTRODUCTION:**

Read out the story *New Shoes for Ben* to the children.



# New Shoes for Ben

**Ben needed new shoes for school and Dad said that they would go into town to Shawn's Shoe Shop in the Main Street to get a nice pair. But Dad had forgotten about the summer festival. This meant that the town was packed with people walking up and down or standing in groups to watch some of the street musicians. There were lots of things to see and do. It was good fun because the children got balloons and flags and the grown ups were very happy.**

Ben held Dad's hand tightly as they made their way through the crowds. It was very noisy and Ben felt squashed by all the people passing by. It was a little bit scary too. Ben was glad when they got to the shoe shop. But just as they were about to go in, Dad bumped into his friend Harry. Dad and Harry chatted away about the football match and about who was going to win on Sunday. Ben got bored listening to them so he looked at all the shoes in the window and tried to decide which ones he would like.





Then Ben heard people laughing and shouting. He looked around. A big crowd had gathered just up the street. They were watching a clown doing tricks on a sort of bicycle that had only one wheel! Ben wandered over to have a better look. The clown wobbled on the bike and everyone thought he would fall off but he never did. Ben laughed and laughed. Then the clown went off down the street on his funny bike and the people began to move away. Ben turned around to tell Dad about the clown but Dad wasn't there. His friend Harry wasn't there and Shawn's Shoe Shop wasn't there either! Ben must have walked far away from the shop without realising it. 'Dad! Dad!' Ben shouted. But Dad didn't hear him because there was loud music blaring from some big speakers. Ben shouted again and again but it was no use. Dad was gone and he was lost! He was all alone in the town and he didn't know his way home. He started to cry. The tears streamed down his cheeks.

Suddenly, he heard a voice. 'Well young man,' said the voice 'have you lost your mum or dad?' Ben looked around. A woman dressed in a uniform had bent down and was talking to him. 'I'm Garda Nolan' she said. 'I might be able to help you. Can you tell me what happened?' Ben dried his eyes and told the garda about Dad and Harry having a chat about the football outside the shoe shop. He told her about the clown on the bicycle and about Dad not being there when he turned around. Garda Nolan started to laugh. 'A man called Harry talking about football?' she said. 'Well,



that can only be one person around here. It's Harry Nolan! My uncle Harry! Ben thought it was funny that a garda had an uncle but he was glad that she knew his Dad's friend. Garda Nolan rang her uncle's mobile number straightaway. Harry was still with Ben's dad, not chatting now, but searching the streets for Ben. Harry told Ben's dad the good news that his little boy was safe and sound and being minded by a garda.

While Ben waited for his dad to come and collect him, Garda Nolan showed him the badge on her cap, the number on her uniform, her notebook and her special belt, which had lots of different things on it, including a whistle and a torch. Ben thought the belt was cool.

Soon Dad and Harry came running up the street. Dad was smiling. 'Thank goodness you're safe Ben!' said Dad, giving Ben a big hug. 'Don't thank goodness Dad,' said Ben, 'thank Garda Nolan!'

'I almost forgot, said Dad, 'Thank you so much for keeping Ben safe.'

'No problem,' said Garda Nolan, 'it's all part of the job!' She waved at them and walked off down the street to help other people in trouble.

Dad took Ben's hand and they started walking back to the car. Then Ben remembered. 'The shoes Dad! What about the shoes?' he asked. Dad laughed. 'I almost forgot about them too,' he said as they went back towards Shawn's Shoe Shop. 'But I promise you Ben,' said Dad, 'I won't stop to talk to Harry about football or anything else. We will just get the shoes!'

Ben got very nice shiny black shoes for school. He walked up and down in them in the shop. He looked at them in the mirror and thought they looked a bit like the ones Garda Nolan wore. Maybe he would get a hat and a radio and a torch and a notebook one day and be just like a garda himself! Now that was a good idea!





## DEVELOPMENT:

Discuss the story with the children. Here are some possible questions:

- Why did Ben and his dad go to town?
- What was happening in town that day?
- What do you think it was like in the street?
- Who did Dad meet? What were they talking about?
- How did Ben get lost?
- How do you think he felt being lost?
- How do you think Dad felt when he discovered Ben was lost?
- Who helped Ben and in what way?
- What sorts of equipment did Garda Nolan show to Ben?
- Have you ever been lost, even for a few minutes?
- What happened?
- What would you do if you got lost again?

## FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITY 1

Facilitate a discussion among the children about other things that a garda does in addition to helping children who are lost. Ask the children to think of when and where they have seen a garda – e.g. on the street, in a garda car, on a motor bike, on point duty, at a football match or on the television.



## FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITY 2

Support the children to take part in a role play. One child pretends to be Garda Nolan and one pretends to be her uncle Harry. What does Garda Nolan say when she rings Harry?



## FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITY 3

Ask the children to draw a picture of a garda they have seen. Encourage a variety of situations. Display the pictures with captions. Senior Infants might write their own captions, e.g. 'I saw a garda on my road.'



## HOME LINK

Give the children a copy of activity sheet 5 and ask them to colour the items on it, which they think a garda might use for his/her work.



# New Shoes for Ben

Please colour in the things that a garda might use for his or her work.



Talk about the work of gardaí with your child.

Teach your child how and when to access the emergency services. Teach them to say their name and to give their home address when seeking help in an emergency. However, make sure that they understand not to reveal this information to strangers.

Parent's/Guardian's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

*A Ballot on Children's Issues*

# ACTIVITY 7

*Your Voice,  
Your Vote*



## A Ballot on Children's Issues

# Your Voice, Your Vote

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Almost 75,000 children and young people in over 560 schools and centres throughout the country took part in the Big Ballot consultation organised by the Ombudsman for Children's Office in 2007. Feedback from participating children, teachers and principals indicated that among the principal benefits of participation in the Big Ballot were opportunities for children to learn about children's rights; to form and express opinions; and to participate in a democratic process by casting votes on children's rights issues. Teachers also told us that children were really engaged and enthusiastic about taking part in a ballot and the experience of casting a vote. This final activity builds on this feedback, containing as it does suggestions for holding a ballot on children's issues.

### DO I HOLD A SINGLE CLASS OR A WHOLE SCHOOL BALLOT?

The ballot can of course be undertaken at class level. However, the learning from the Big Ballot suggests that interest in, excitement about and learning from the exercise can be significantly enhanced by conducting the ballot on a whole school basis. If you can take this approach, it is recommended that you and your colleagues give 6th class children responsibility for organising the whole school ballot. Whether you undertake a ballot with the children in your class or participate in a whole school ballot, giving roles and responsibilities to children around organising the ballot for the duration of the process will make the activity more fun and enhance its value as an exercise in citizenship.



### WHAT ISSUES DO CHILDREN VOTE ON?

Facilitating children to take part in a ballot focused on the issues they have explored through the preceding activities in this resource will support children to reflect on the importance of making informed decisions and choices. However, the ballot activity could also be used as an opportunity for children to identify, articulate and vote on issues that are most important to them in, for example, their school or their local area.

### FEED BACK TO THE OMBUDSMAN FOR CHILDREN'S OFFICE

Here at the Ombudsman for Children's Office, we would be delighted to hear from the children about the issues they have voted on and why they think one or more of these issues is so important. They can email us at:

[oco@oco.ie](mailto:oco@oco.ie)

or write to us, with 'Our Ballot Results' on the envelope, at:

**Ombudsman for Children's Office,  
1st Floor, Millennium House,  
52-56 Great Strand Street,  
Dublin 1.**

Depending on how you approach this activity, there are any number of people who the children could share the results of their ballot with and/or who they could ask to take their results on board – for example, your school's principal and Board of Management; local county councillors and TDs; or local service providers and community organisations.

### NOTE FOR TEACHERS ON FACILITATING THIS ACTIVITY:

However you decide to conduct this activity, you will need to adapt the steps we outline below to take account of:

- the ages and capacities of the children you are working with;
- the class you are working with;
- whether you are holding a class or whole school ballot;
- whether you are basing the ballot around the issues in this resource or other issues raised by the children themselves.

If you are teaching infant or junior class children and are focusing the ballot on the issues explored through this resource, you might remind the children of the issues by referring back to the stories. In terms of voting, you may wish to devise a more age-appropriate approach to facilitating younger children to cast their votes. For example, you could allocate a different colour to each issue and ask the children to use, for example, equivalent coloured blocks, paper or alternative materials available to you in the classroom in order to express their preference.



**OBJECTIVES:****Children will:**

- develop their understanding of democratic practices;
- identify and prioritise issues that affect and are important to them;
- have the opportunity to take a positive action in relation to the issue prioritised (optional).

**YOU WILL NEED:**

- To develop and make copies of a ballot paper, etc. to facilitate the holding of a ballot (templates are provided to assist you with this).

**ACTIVITY****1. Preparing for the ballot***All classes:*

- Facilitate the children to review the issues they have explored through the activities in this resource. Alternatively, if you are not basing the ballot on the issues in this resource, support the children to identify five issues that affect and matter to them in, for example, their school or their local community.
- In preparation for the vote, divide the children into groups, one for each issue to be voted on. Ask each group to prepare a short presentation to the class on their issue with the aim of persuading others to vote for it. Each group could also display any work they have done that is relevant to the issue and/or design and display a campaign poster about the issue.
- Advertise the ballot and the identified issues.
- Raise the children's awareness of procedures for the ballot (i.e. why it is a secret ballot, how to use a ballot paper, etc.) and, in more general terms, about what elections are for, etc.

*For the class/group  
organising the ballot:*

- The class or group that is organising and overseeing the ballot process needs to be introduced to procedures and key roles such as returning officer, counters, guards for the voting booths and observers. In addition, children can make issue cards for display beside ballot boxes; collect and display artwork/posters for each issue from classrooms; and prepare/design ballot papers.
- If you are working with the organising group:
  - help them to choose a Returning Officer;
  - distribute the checklist on activity sheet 6;
  - support the children with deciding who will perform what role (the Returning Officer should have at least two assistants);
  - help the children to make and display a corresponding list of duties.

## 2. Holding the ballot

- The ballot Returning Officer will be responsible for overseeing the procedures.
- Hold the vote in an assembly area. If possible, older children could take responsibility for bringing the younger children to and from the voting area and helping to oversee the vote.
- Following the ballot, the Returning Officer should be facilitated to ensure that everyone is made aware of the results.

## 3. Options for follow-up activities

Encourage the children to bring home the results of the ballot. In addition, you could support the children:

- to identify and collaborate in taking a positive action in response to the issue, which topped the poll;

and/or

- to email or write a letter to the Ombudsman for Children's Office to inform us of the results of the ballot, their views on these results and, if applicable, any action they have taken in relation to the issue that received the most votes;

and/or

- to make display charts of class and/or school results.

# Organising Your Ballot

## Jobs Checklist

**Name of Returning Officer:** .....

The returning officer's job is: .....

.....

**Names of Returning Officer's Assistants:** .....

The assistants' job is: .....

.....

**Names of Guards (for the voting booths or boxes):** .....

The guards' job is: .....

.....

**Names of Observers:** .....

The observers' job is: .....

.....

**Names of Vote Counters:** .....

The vote counters' job is: .....

.....

**Names of Vote Recorders:** .....

The vote recorders' job is: .....

.....

# Sample Ballot Paper

**Please say which issue below you think is MOST important.**  
Put a tick in one box only.

☐ *Issue:* .....

☐ *Issue:* .....

☐ *Issue:* .....

☐ *Issue:* .....

☐ *Issue:* .....

**Please fold and place in the ballot box.**  
Thank you!

# Sample Returns Sheet

**School name:** .....

**School address:** .....

## Ballot results

Please indicate the number of votes cast for each issue:

*Issue:* .....

*Issue:* .....

*Issue:* .....

*Issue:* .....

*Issue:* .....

**School stamp:**

**Name of Returning Officer** (in capitals):

.....

**Signature of Returning Officer:** .....





