



Guidance

Curriculum and  
Standards

# Primary *National Strategy*

**Excellence and Enjoyment:  
social and emotional aspects of  
learning**

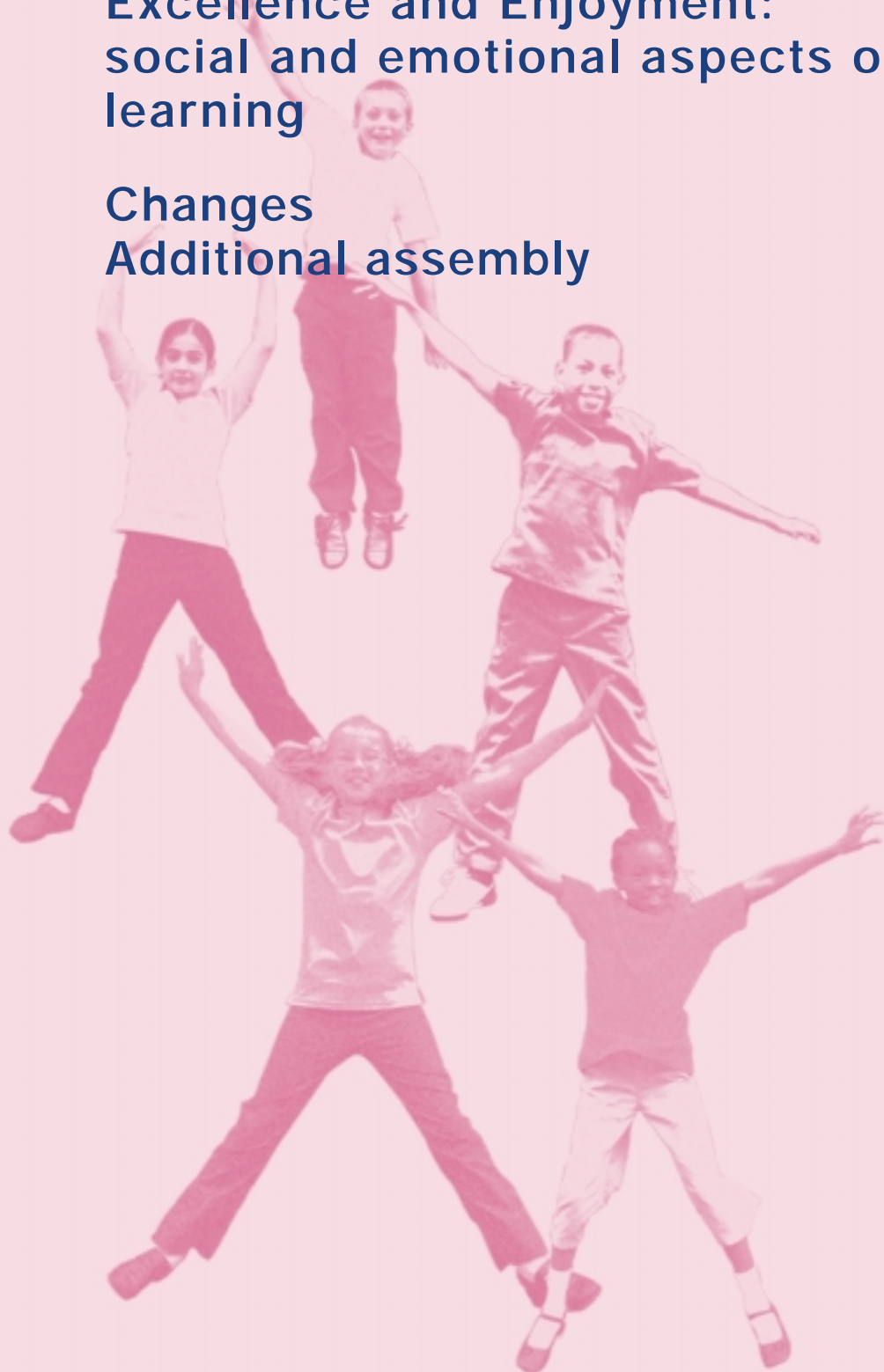
**Changes  
Additional assembly**

Headteachers, teachers  
and practitioners in  
primary schools,  
middle schools, special  
schools and Foundation  
Stage settings

Status: Recommended

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## The assembly

### You will need:

Music: the suggested music for the children to come and leave by is *The Four Seasons* by Vivaldi. You could play one season for the children to come in to and another for them to leave by. You could vary the seasons each time this theme is introduced.

A large stone or rock and a growing plant (or alternatively you could draw a picture of these on the flipchart).

A flipchart and pens.

### Introduction

Tell the children this assembly is about changes. Remind them that the music they have been listening to is about the changing seasons. Ask the children what other changes happen all the time (such as day changing to night, or the weather changing). Say that when these changes happen we understand them and expect them. We even look forward to them.

Say that other changes can feel more uncomfortable. Sometimes when we are used to things we don't want them to change. We want things to stay just as they are.

Show the children the stone and the plant. Ask them what the difference between them is. Encourage them to say that the plant is a living thing and the stone is not. The stone will only change when something makes it change like water or wind. The plant changes all the time because it is living. It grows and it changes throughout its life.

Remind the children that they are living things. They grow and change and as they do, all around them other people are growing and changing too. As they grow they will make new friends, move to a new class or a new school, maybe have a new brother or sister or move to a new house or town. These changes can be very exciting but they can also be uncomfortable. The story the children are going to hear is about someone who didn't like change. As they listen, ask the children to think what sort of feelings the people in the story are feeling.

### The story

**Azis had lived all his life in the same small house in the same small village on the banks of a great river. He was a weaver and every day he worked at his loom weaving pure white cloth. Once a week he went to the market to sell the cloth and buy food.**



As the years went by, many people came down the river from far-away places bringing their goods to the village. Some of these people liked the village so much they decided to stay. Soon the small village became a big, busy town. Azis saw everything changing around him and different people milling about the streets and the market place and he didn't like it at all.

'Everything is changing round here,' he grumbled to himself, 'my village is big now and full of strangers wearing strange clothes and selling strange things in the market. Oh, how nice it would be if things would just stay as they used to be.'

Azis thought that everything had changed around him while he had stayed exactly the same, but of course he was wrong. He used to go out and meet people, but now he never spoke to anyone at all. He used to be happy but now he was always miserable and complaining.

One day there was a knock on Azis's door. He opened it a tiny crack. Nobody had knocked on his door for years. Standing outside was a woman he had never seen before. She was holding out a great skein of brilliant red silk thread. It sparkled and shone in the sunshine.



'I am Numi,' said the woman. 'I live close to you now and have heard you are a good weaver. Will you weave this thread into cloth for me?'

'I will not,' said Azis rather rudely. 'I only weave white cloth.' And he shut the door hard. But that night he dreamed of beautiful red silk.

The next day there was another knock on the door. Azis opened it a tiny crack. There stood Numi. This time she was holding out a great skein of purple silk thread. It shimmered and glowed in the sunshine.

'Will you weave this thread into cloth for me?' she said. 'I will pay you.'

'I will not,' said Azis, although he could hardly take his eyes off the beautiful silk. 'I only weave white cloth.' And he shut the door hard. But that night he dreamed of beautiful red and purple silks.



The next day there was yet another knock at the door. Azis opened it a tiny crack. There stood Numi. This time she was holding out a skein of golden silk. How it dazzled Azis's eyes in the sunshine.

'Will you weave this golden thread into cloth for me?' said Numi. 'It is so fine only the best weaver can weave it.' Azis gazed longingly at the beautiful thread. It glistened like liquid in the sunshine. He didn't know what to say. He didn't know what to do. It had been so long since he had talked to anyone. But perhaps the golden thread had cast a spell on him because at last he said, 'Perhaps you would like to come in for a moment?' He opened the door to Numi a little more.



Once she was sitting down in Azis's house, Numi told him all about herself. She told him she had travelled hundreds and hundreds of miles along the river and across the desert until she reached this town and decided to stay. She told him how frightening it had been at first living in a place where she didn't know anybody and where people ate different food and wore different clothes. And she told him how she had stopped being frightened because everywhere she went the people were so friendly and kind and nice.

'Every time I go out,' she said, 'I see so many new faces. Everything is different but it is wonderful and exciting and new. There is so much to learn and find out about. Every day is like a whole new adventure.'

Azis listened and stared. He had never met anyone like Numi before. But when she asked him again if he would weave the golden thread into cloth for her, he said, 'I only weave white cloth. I've never done anything else.'

After that, Azis often saw Numi passing his house or in the market place. She always smiled and called, 'Hello Azis.' And soon, Azis found himself smiling back and calling out 'Hello Numi.'



Each evening when Azis had finished his weaving, instead of complaining to himself as he used to do about how dreadful everything had become, he thought about Numi and how she had travelled so many miles to a new town, and how frightened she must have been.

Then, one day Azis said to himself, 'I'm sorry I sent Numi away when she brought the beautiful silk thread round. It was brave of her to knock on my door and I was very mean.'

Azis went out looking for Numi. He found her in the market place talking and laughing. He walked up to her.

'I'm sorry I refused to weave your silks into cloth, Numi,' he said. 'I'd be pleased to do it for you, now.' Numi's smile was so big it seemed as though the sun was shining even more brightly. She linked one of her arms though Azis's and they walked to her home together to get the silk.

That all happened a long time ago. Azis and Numi are now the best of friends. Azis doesn't only weave white cloth, he weaves the most beautiful silks in the most brilliant colours and Numi sews them into gorgeous clothes. All around the town you can see people shimmering and shining in their silk tunics and dresses, and the most shimmering and shiny of all is Numi. But better even than that, Azis has stopped complaining. 'After all,' he often says to himself, 'every day is like a whole new adventure.'



Now ask the children what changes happened in the story? For example:

- Azis saw different people around him and 'strange' things in the market.
- Numi moved to a new town with new people wearing different clothes and eating different food.
- Azis spoke to Numi and let her into his home.
- Azis wove coloured silk thread as well as white.
- Azis stopped complaining and learned to see the world differently.

Ask the children what Azis was feeling when he saw everything in his village changing around him. Chart their responses, for example scared, anxious, worried, frightened, isolated, lonely, uncomfortable.

Ask the children how these feelings made Azis behave. Chart their responses, for example unfriendly, grumpy, unkind, ungrateful, mean, rude, racist.

Ask the children how Numi might have felt when she moved to a new place.

Chart their responses, for example scared, frightened, nervous, anxious, excited, happy, looking forward.

Ask them how these feelings made Numi behave. Chart their responses, for example friendly, kind, forgiving, brave, understanding.

Ask the children what Azis might have learned from Numi. Did Numi learn anything from Azis?

Tell the children that changes can make us feel all of these feelings at different times and they can make us behave in different ways. We need to remember that we are all living things like the plant and not like rocks or stones. Azis forgot that changes are a part of life. Changes can help us learn new things about ourselves and each other and can be exciting, even if they are uncomfortable at first. Sometimes it is best to try and be brave and forward-looking like Numi, even when we might want things to stay the same.

## Conclusion

Ask the children to find a still, quiet place inside themselves. Ask them to think about how they can help themselves and others when changes are difficult or uncomfortable. Ask them to remember that Numi was brave even though she was afraid, and friendly even when people may have hurt her feelings. Ask the children to try and find courage and friendliness deep inside themselves and keep these thoughts in their minds as the music plays and they leave the hall.

(Keep the flipchart with the children's responses for the follow-up assembly at the end of the theme.)



## Follow-up assembly to be held at the end of the theme

Use the same music. Begin by reminding the children briefly about the story of Azis who didn't want anything to change, and Numi who helped him to realise that change can be exciting and good. Ask the children to read the feeling words and behaviour words written on the flipchart from the previous assembly and remind them that changes can make us feel different things and lead us to behave in different ways.

Now the children from each year group present some of the work about changes that they have done in class. The class teacher could choose which of the SEAL work the classes will feed back or there are examples set out in the original 'Changes' assembly (see *Changes Theme overview*, DfES 1369-2005 G, pages 13-14).

End the assembly by asking everyone to think, in silence, about a change that has happened to them in their lives. They should think about some of the difficult feelings that change might have caused. They should then think about the positive, exciting things that have happened because of that change. Say that children often find courage and hope and perseverance inside themselves in times of change and they should feel proud that they have moved forward. Finally, ask them to think about how they could help those who might be facing change to be brave and positive. Play the music as the children leave taking their thoughts with them.

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