



## Developing an ESD curriculum in a junior school

BRIXINGTON JUNIOR SCHOOL, DEVON

A whole school approach

This case study tells of the process used by one school to develop a whole school approach to the teaching and learning of sustainable development – including management, curriculum and pupil involvement. It describes how, through a series of steps taken over several years, ESD has become integrated into all curriculum subjects as well as having a separate policy and curriculum in its own right. It also highlights ways the school has found to maintain momentum and focus in the long term.

"What is sustainable development?"

"I already do that?"

"How can we fit this into an already crowded curriculum?"

"I can't do that."

These were just some of the many questions and comments that we were presented with when we first discussed the idea of developing an education for sustainable development (ESD) curriculum. However, after two years of hard work we were receiving feedback like:

"My understanding has developed. I have increased confidence of teaching sustainability throughout the curriculum."

"We have raised awareness of environmental and social issues."

This case study explains how an 'ordinary' junior school managed to develop and introduce a sustainable curriculum.

Background

Brixington is a large, suburban junior school with over 400 pupils and staff. It is located in Exmouth, a large seaside town and popular tourist location in East Devon.

Our school is fortunate to benefit from extensive grounds. We have two large playgrounds, a large field and an area around the school made up of different habitats including a pond, an orchard and a wooded area. The school already had a feel for environmental issues, although staff felt we taught less about the wider world due to the constraints of the National Curriculum.

The school staff is enthusiastic and hard working, dealing with the demands of the curriculum. As a school we have always developed new initiatives and ideas, which put us in an ideal position to look at new projects. One of these new projects was to try to develop a whole school approach to the teaching and learning of sustainable development. This case study explains how our school went through this process, sharing some of our experiences. We believe our process worked. However, other schools may work in different ways, but we hope that some of ideas will be useful.

ONE PLANET  
SCHOOLS