



WWF *for a living planet*

WWF Scotland

Little Dunkeld, Dunkeld
Perthshire PH8 0AD
t: 01350 728200
f: 01350 728201
ISDN: 01350 728276
wwfscotland.org.uk

Teacher Education Review - Briefing Note April 2010

1.0 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP AND CURRICULUM FOR EXCELLENCE

- 1.1 The Scottish Government set out the role that education must play in achieving a culture shift towards sustainability in *Learning for Our Future*¹, *Scotland's First Action Plan for the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development 2005–2014*. Scotland's Action Plan for the second half of the Decade will be published in May 2010.
- 1.2 As a result of the Action Plan, Experiences and Outcomes related to sustainable development and global citizenship are spread across the Curriculum for Excellence and citizenship, sustainable development and international education have been identified as "*important themes...that need to be developed in a range of contexts*"².
- 1.3 While the Experiences and Outcomes set out the knowledge and understanding learners would be expected to acquire, how this is taught is pivotal to the development of the values and attitudes set out in the Purposes of the Curriculum. The teaching and learning strategies employed by schools that are successfully addressing sustainable development and global citizenship in ways that build values and attitudes have recently been documented by WWF³ and research referenced in this report has shown that this approach also increases motivation for learning and raises attainment.
- 1.4 Effective sustainable development and global citizen education is dependent on three key factors:
 - Teachers being confident in their own knowledge and understanding of sustainable development and global citizenship issues.
 - Teachers being confident in the use of the learning and teaching strategies that have been found to deliver effective sustainable development and global citizen education.
 - Teachers and schools having effective processes for curriculum and whole school planning to ensure sustainable development and global citizen education are embedded in both learning and teaching and the wider ethos and functioning of the school.

2.0 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP - THE CURRENT SITUATION

- 2.1 Implementation of the Curriculum for Excellence provides a unique opportunity to ensure that all current, pre-service and newly-qualified educators are prepared to put sustainability and global citizenship at the core of their learning and teaching. There is, however, evidence that teachers are not yet fully equipped to meet this challenge.

¹ Scottish Government: *Learning for our Future: Scotland's first Action Plan for the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development*, 2006.

² Scottish Government: *Building the Curriculum 3 – A Framework for Teaching and Learning*, 2008.

³ Gayford, C: *Pedagogies for effective learning for sustainability*, WWF-UK, 2010.



Director of WWF Scotland: Dr Richard Dixon
President: HRH Princess Alexandra,
the Hon Lady Ogilvy KG, GCVO
Chair: Ed Smith
Chief Executive: David Nussbaum

WWF Scotland is part of WWF-UK, a charity registered in England number 1081247 and in Scotland number SC039593 and a company limited by guarantee registered in England number 4016725.
VAT number 733 761821
Printed on recycled paper

- 2.2** WWF research⁴ shows that the reality in most schools is a fragmented, piecemeal approach to sustainable development and global citizenship education. Activity relies on a few keen teachers, with many staff feeling that it is not in their remit. This concurs with Learning and Teaching Scotland's snapshot of the status of Sustainable Development Education in schools in 2007⁵, which concludes that "*Schools will need ethos, leadership and management that foster whole school participation if they are to fully engage with SDE, a characteristic shared with much of Curriculum for Excellence. Embedding SDE in Scottish schools is a long-term process involving winning 'hearts and minds', not just getting the curriculum right. Continuing professional development (CPD) will be needed for a variety of audiences, including 'training for trainers'. A foundation needs to be built through initial teacher education.*"
- 2.3** The Expected Features of the Standard for Initial Teacher Education (December 2006) state that, at the end of the programme, all student teachers are to "*have knowledge and understanding of... sustainable development, citizenship, international education; know about the principles of education for citizenship and be willing to encourage pupils to be active, critical and responsible citizens within a local, national and global context; know about environmental issues and be able to contribute to education for sustainable development*". WWF research⁶ has shown that Scotland's teacher education universities have not fully integrated sustainable development and global citizenship into their Initial Teacher Education provision, despite these clear references throughout the Standard.
- 2.4** The research described above also highlights that the majority of knowledge and expertise in sustainable development and global citizen education is found outwith the statutory education body in voluntary organisations and NGOs.

3.0 WWF SCOTLAND'S WORK ON TEACHER EDUCATION

Initial Teacher Education

- 3.1** As a member of the International Development Education Association of Scotland, WWF is currently working on the 'Making Connections-Taking a Global Approach to Initial Teacher Education' initiative (www.global-approach.org.uk). This is a three year project, funded by DfID until August 2010, which is working with all seven Scottish ITE Universities; looking at the opportunities and challenges of embedding sustainable development and global citizenship into their programmes and teaching approaches.
- 3.2** The initiative is supporting networking, capacity-building and research between Teacher Education Institutions and is working to highlight innovative approaches that are currently being demonstrated and to promote their further development. A research publication will be launched at the end of project conference.
- 3.3** Two needs have been identified in ITE institutions: the first is for teacher educators to design and deliver courses that adequately address the needs of students in relation to sustainable development and global citizenship. The second is to ensure a focus on research activity that advances understanding of interdisciplinary and whole school approaches to learning and builds pedagogical and subject knowledge.

Continuing professional development

- 3.4** It is recognised that the sustained personal and professional growth of teachers covers a wide range of activities including peer learning, joint development of activities,

⁴ H'ren, B: *One School at a Time – A Decade of Learning for Sustainability*, WWF-UK, 2004.

⁵ Grant, R and Borradaile, L: *A Time of Opportunity: The current status of SDE in Scottish Schools*, Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2007.

⁶ Inskipp, C: *Sustainable Development in Scotland's Universities' Teacher Education provision*, WWF Scotland, 2007

collaborative learning, mentoring, seminars, workshops and networking both through web-based approaches and face-to-face experiences. WWF has considerable experience in developing innovative approaches to professional development in sustainable development and global citizenship, such as our Participatory Online Course for educators and the popular Chartered Teacher module 'Education for a Sustainable Environment', run for the last three years in partnership with the University of Strathclyde.

- 3.5** WWF-UK has also carried out research on the role of leadership (with National College of School Leadership, 2008)⁷, which highlighted the importance of leadership and the need for CPD in this area. The research resulted in 'Sustainable Schools' Leadership training in England. In Scotland, we have carried out research with 10 schools and have jointly developed a CPD resource, *Pathways*, to be used as part of a school's regular planning process to make it easier to produce the cross-curricular and whole school parts of school development plans and schemes of work. *Pathways* helps all staff get to grips with interdisciplinary themes, understand how they fit into their own teaching, successfully link up current initiatives and create an action plan for embedding cross-curricular themes within the whole school.⁸

4.0 WHAT IS NEEDED

- 4.1** All of the above serves to highlight that Scotland has a curriculum that is conducive to effective sustainable development and global citizenship, policies that state that it should be done, and there are many examples of how it can be done, with evidence of the beneficial impact this has on education. Despite this, teacher education has largely ignored sustainable development and global citizen education, statutory bodies have largely failed to effectively engage with the knowledge and expertise of the voluntary sector, and as a result, the vast majority of teachers do not have the confidence, tools and techniques they need to undertake this type of learning and teaching and embed it in their schools.
- 4.2** Extra CPD time has been agreed with local authorities for in-service and CPD activities over the next three years in relation to Curriculum for Excellence: "*time for teachers and schools to engage in dialogue around implementing Curriculum for Excellence; time for individual class teachers to consider how their classroom practice needs to change and time for discussion within schools and across whole school communities around the new curriculum*".⁹ There will be a need for CPD to support teachers in their delivery of the sustainable development and global citizenship outcomes and interdisciplinary themes outlined in the Curriculum for Excellence but a clear strategy will need to be in place to ensure that this will happen.
- 4.3** If the commitments to sustainable development and global citizenship in the Expected Features of the Standard for Initial Teacher Education are to be met, it will be necessary for the ITE Universities to acknowledge their importance and have the means to increase capacity in this area.
- 4.4** In taking forward sustainable development and global citizenship in both Continuing Professional Development and Initial Teacher Education, it will be necessary for the statutory bodies charged with responsibility for these to form effective partnership with the voluntary and NGO sector to ensure that teacher education activities incorporate the expertise that exists in this sector.

⁷ Jackson, L: *Leading sustainable schools: what the research tells us*. NCSL, June 2008

⁸ WWF Scotland: *Pathways to Sustainability*

⁹ Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning, January 2009.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 A national programme to train all Head Teachers in ‘Leading a Sustainable School’

Establishing a whole school approach to sustainable development and global citizenship takes leadership. There is already an established Leading Sustainable Schools programme in England but Scotland is lagging behind. The establishment of a similar programme in Scotland, as part of the requirement for the Standard for Headship, would remedy this and is an essential step to ensuring all schools become sustainable schools.

5.2 Ensure teacher training meets the Professional Standard sustainable development criteria

There is a requirement in the Standard for Initial Teacher Education for all student teachers to have knowledge, understanding, skills and abilities for sustainable development and global citizenship but this is not reflected in the reality of teacher training.

Work should be undertaken with the General Teaching Council for Scotland to make sure that all accredited teacher training courses demonstrate how they will equip student teachers to effectively undertake sustainable development and global citizenship education.

5.3 A national programme of sustainable development and global citizenship continuing professional development for all practicing teachers

Sustainable development and global citizenship appears as a theme throughout the Curriculum for Excellence, but there is little evidence that teachers are prepared to deliver it.

In developing any programme of professional development to support existing teachers, providers should work strategically with agencies, NGOs and teachers to ensure sustainable development and global citizenship are embedded in these programmes.

ABOUT WWF SCOTLAND

WWF Scotland is part of the UK arm of the WWF Global Network, the world's leading environmental organisation; founded in 1961 and active in over 100 countries. Using our unique combination of practical experience, knowledge and credibility, WWF staff work with governments, businesses and communities in the UK and around the world so people and nature thrive within their fair share of the planet's natural resources.

WWF Scotland has worked in partnership with education leaders for over 25 years to ensure that our education system equips us with the values, skills and knowledge that we need to live sustainably. In Scotland, we are working closely with the Global Citizens Teams in the Scottish Government's Schools Directorate and in Learning and Teaching Scotland. We are members of the Government's UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development Action Plan Steering Group and SQA's Sustainable Development Advisory Group. WWF is also a trustee of Scotland's Sustainable Development Education Network and a key member of the International Development Education Association for Scotland (IDEAS).