

Learning for Life and Work

Local and Global Citizenship

Case Study

Grosvenor Grammar School

Local & Global Citizenship at Key Stage 3

Background

Grosvenor Grammar School is a co-educational grammar school situated in East Belfast. It is a controlled grammar school, under the control of Belfast Education & Library Board. It currently has an enrolment of 1075 pupils with approximately 70 full-time teaching staff. Local & Global Citizenship education is delivered in Grosvenor Grammar School at both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 (through the teaching of GCSE Learning for Life & Work). In Grosvenor we are coming to end of our second academic year with Local & Global Citizenship as part of our Key Stage 3 curriculum.

Local & Global Citizenship has been introduced to the curriculum on a gradual basis. It started in September 2003 with one pilot GCSE Learning for Life & Work class who studied the Local & Global Citizenship module in their Form 4 year, undertaking the examination for the module in May 2004. Then in September 2004 the GCSE was extended to four classes and Grosvenor also introduced one period a week of Local & Global Citizenship to all Form 1 (Year 8) pupils. In September 2005 three GCSE Learning for Life & Work classes were added and the Local & Global Citizenship programme was rolled out to both Form 2 (Year 9) and Form 3 (Year 10). From September 2006 Local & Global Citizenship will be part of the weekly curriculum for all Key Stage 3 and 4 pupils within Grosvenor Grammar School as GCSE Learning for Life & Work becomes a compulsory subject.

Pupils cover a range of themes throughout Key Stage 3 Local & Global Citizenship and the resources provided by BELB are used (large purple folder!). In Form 1 the theme is "Diversity & Inclusion", Form 2 concentrate on "Equality and Social Justice" and Form 3 is centred on "Democracy & Active Participation".

Timetable

At Key Stage 3, pupils are involved in Local & Global Citizenship classes for one 35 minute period per week. These periods are organised in form classes with approximately 26-28 pupils in each

class. There are six form classes in each year group. Classes are timetabled to take place in a range of ordinary classrooms and mobiles, with no specific room set aside for the teaching of Local & Global Citizenship – all communal resources are currently kept in the room of the Head of Department. Grosvenor's Independent Learning Centre, which provides access to C2K and the Internet, is also used on a regular basis as is the school library. The larger size of the library and its layout, with conference style tables and comfortable chairs, is more conducive to some of the activities undertaken in Local & Global Citizenship classes. Pupils also enjoy classes being held in the library and they respond positively to being in surroundings that are different to the rest of the majority of their classes.

Teaching Staff

The teachers of Local & Global Citizenship are taken from a wide range of subject areas including Business Studies, History, Religious Studies, Spanish, English, Biology and Technology. There are currently 12 teachers delivering the Local & Global Citizenship programme and some of these teachers are also involved in GCSE Learning for Life & Work. From September 2006 an even greater number of teachers will be involved at both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 with Learning for Life & Work becoming the largest department in the school due to the fact that all Key Stage 3 pupils will be involved in Local & Global Citizenship, Employability and PSHE and all Form 4 (Year 11) pupils will be studying for GCSE Learning for Life & Work. An initial five teachers undertook and have completed BELB's seven day training programme (spread over three years) and another five teachers are currently involved in the programme. This training was considered necessary given the size of Grosvenor and the fact that Local & Global Citizenship has been rolled out to all pupils in Key Stage 3. Some teachers have been selected due to the skills they have being a benefit for the teaching of Local & Global Citizenship, while other teachers have been selected due to it fitting into their timetable. All newly appointed teachers have Learning for Life & Work written into the job description and this was felt necessary due to the large number of classes now involved in all aspects of Learning for Life & Work including Local & Global Citizenship – it is likely that all teachers will be involved at some stage.

Attitudes of Teaching Staff

The implementation and teaching of Local & Global Citizenship has received a mixed reaction from staff with more positive attitudes evident than negative attitudes. Some of the negativity expressed is the result of other more “traditional” subjects losing out in order to enable Local & Global Citizenship to have time in the timetable. It can also be stated that some of the more cynical feelings come from staff who are not actually involved in delivering Local & Global Citizenship so therefore their attitude is linked to a lack of understanding about what the subject is about and what it is trying to achieve. In saying that, many of the teachers involved in Local & Global Citizenship have found the classes both enjoyable and worthwhile. Teachers enjoy being able to use different styles of teaching that maybe aren’t always suitable for many of their exam classes. Attitudes also vary depending on the class you are teaching. It appears that with “good” classes the time spent in Local & Global Citizenship can be very enjoyable and good fun but that if you have a “bad” class (in terms of noise / restlessness) then it can be a very tiring subject to teach due to the fact that it is so interactive and does require a high percentage of teacher/pupil interaction. One teacher also commented that at times she wished it could be a bit more challenging in terms of actually giving pupils something to learn / be tested on – a point raised later under issues for implementation.

Implementation

All pupils in Key Stage 3 receive a bound Local & Global Citizenship pupil booklet at the start of the year. This booklet covers all the handouts and worksheets that the pupils should require over the course of the year. In the same way, all teachers receive a “Teacher’s Guide” which includes lesson plans as outlined in the resources, copies of all pupil worksheets and any relevant answers sheets. Laminated class sets of any cards etc to be used have been produced and are kept in filing cabinet for teachers to borrow as and when they are required. However, in September all Form 3 teachers will receive their own individual sets of cards.

There are a number of reasons why the resources have been organised in this way. Firstly, this is a subject that has been “imposed” on many teachers and they are maybe only teaching it for one or two periods a week. Therefore it needs to be “user-friendly” in terms of minimal preparation time. The pupil booklets are bound and kept in the room in which the class are taught so this

eliminates any requirement for teachers to be photocopying. It also means that pupils view the subject a little more seriously as their work is clearly laid out for them and they can see the progression of activities. It also means that if a teacher is absent, the covering teacher can easily identify the progress of the class. Laminated class sets of cards etc make activities easier to organise and will also last as they can be used year after year. However, they are very time consuming to organise which is why class sets are made available for the use of all teachers in the department.

A variety of teaching methods are used in delivering Local & Global Citizenship within Grosvenor. Whole class discussions and small group discussions form a large part of the basis from which other activities take place. Often group work will result in some form of presentation to the rest of the class. This helps to keep the group task to be focussed and the feedback may be in the form of a poster, simple reporting back using a spokesperson or a Powerpoint presentation (this obviously depends on the ICT access available)

Issues to consider regarding implementation

A few minor issues have arisen as Grosvenor has integrated Local & Global Citizenship into the school curriculum. One issue has been the layout of classrooms. Most activities are interactive and some of the most effective learning methods require pupils to move around the room in order to interact with each other. In some classrooms the lack of space due to desks etc has made this difficult. For some classes access to ICT has also caused problems. Pupils respond positively to using ICT to aid their learning – research on the internet and Powerpoint presentations are just two effective teaching strategies that require significant access to ICT and it depends on both the time of year and the timetable as to whether or not computer rooms can be made available. Teachers need to be well organised in booking ICT rooms in advance. Timing is also an issue – research, investigations and presentations all take time and in Grosvenor we have found that pupils responded so well to some of the activities that more time needed to be set aside for them than had initially been accounted for in the scheme.

Staff training is another issue – some staff are teaching Local & Global Citizenship without any training at all and while all the resources are provided, training does help to bring the resources to life. Staff also need to ensure that they set the ground rules for the subject at the start of the

year – this subject can result in strong views being expressed. A large number of Non-Governmental Organisations have resources to use in teaching Local & Global Citizenship and they are also happy to come out to schools. However, as yet we have not been able to incorporate these into our programmes and use them to their full potential. The main issue is that we have 6 different classes in each year group, all timetabled at different times and therefore to take advantage of speakers etc the organisation needs to be prepared to come into school six different times or pupils have to be taken out of other classes so they can all be spoken to at the same time – this presents problems in itself if pupils are also missing classes for other activities eg sports matches.

In the future, the issue of homework is likely to come under some discussion especially as Key Stage 3 Local & Global Citizenship is giving pupils a foundation for GCSE Learning for Life & Work. School will have to find some way of monitoring progress in the subject and monitoring performance. This is for the benefit of both teachers and parents plus it was clear from some of the evaluation forms that pupils form a link between homework and the importance given to a subject. At present we do not have any report-writing to do for Local & Global Citizenship.

Pupil Attitudes

In the last number of weeks some Form 2 and Form 3 have filled out evaluation forms about their experiences of Local & Global Citizenship this year. They were asked about their enjoyment of the subject, how important they considered it to be, the activities they found most effective in helping them to learn and any new skills they have developed over the course of the year.

Below are some of the positive comments made by Form 3 pupils who worked through “Democracy & Active Participation” –

“I enjoyed activities when I could express my opinion”

“I enjoyed group work as I had fun and since it was fun I’ve remembered the things we learned”

“The aspects that I have enjoyed the most have been the class discussions as everyone gets the chance to participate and no-one is judged for having different views.”

“I have learnt to listen to the other’s opinions and to take them into account”

“I think Citizenship is important as it teaches us about the world around us.”

"I do consider Citizenship to be important as it teaches you how to communicate with other people and how no one opinion is right or wrong but that we have to respect each other."

The most commonly quoted skills developed were teamwork, problem-solving, decision-making and communication skills.

Negative comments were not common but of those that were given, they mostly centred on how important pupils considered the subject to be. Below are some of the more negative views of Form 3 pupils -

"I don't really consider it important as if it was that important you would do an exam for it. It is not necessary to have a qualification in it for any job."

"I suppose Citizenship is important in a way but it is not as important as the likes of Maths, English and Science".

Form 2 pupils spent the year considering "Equality & Social Justice". Some of their comments include -

"I think Citizenship is important as it prepares you for later life and has made me think about what I say before I say it."

"Posters and group presentations helped me learn most effectively."

"My teamwork and organisational skills have developed because we worked in groups regularly".

"I have become more confident at speaking out in class."

"I've learnt the importance of being able to work in a team and I've become more confident about speaking out in a group."

"I think citizenship is important because I now know more about treating people fairly and treating different races with respect."

They identified many of the skills that Form 3 pupils identified - team working, problem-solving, working to deadlines, ICT skills.

Links with Extra-Curricular Activities

Within Grosvenor a number of extra-curricular activities may be linked to Local & Global Citizenship. The school is heavily involved in the Council for Education in World Citizenship (CEWC) with pupils of all ages taking part in a range of activities such as Drugs Parliaments and MUNGAs. The school also regularly participates in the National Bar Mock Trial Competition (for

sixth form) and the Magistrates Court Competition (for Key Stage 3 pupils). Both of these competitions are organised by the Citizenship Foundation. An international group has been established in school and they consider their role to be one of encouraging inclusivity by raising awareness of various international events and festivals. The Eco-Carers group in school have one various awards for their commitment to caring for the environment. Pupils are given an opportunity to actively participate in school life through the Junior and Middle School Forums and the Sixth Form Management committee. At these meeting, not only do pupils get an opportunity to voice their opinions on various matters of school life but they must also find some way of selecting their class representatives so they gain an awareness of a “democratic” process. Each week a charity collection takes place and pupils have supported some of the organisations studied through Local & Global Citizenship.

Conclusion

Local & Global Citizenship is now an accepted part of the curriculum within Grosvenor Grammar School. Pupils are having positive experiences as some of the earlier quotes have proven. It is clear that anything interactive is effective in promoting learning and pupils have greatly benefited from their involvement in “mini-projects” and working in a variety of different groups rather than always working with their friends. The key to success in teaching Local & Global Citizenship is preparation so the quality of resources is high, the use of good interactive resources including the use of ICT, a variety of teaching strategies and enthusiasm from the teacher!

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