



LOCAL AND GLOBAL LINKS ESTABLISHED – QUEENSFERRY CP SCHOOL IN WALES AND BROFOYEDRU SCHOOL IN GHANA

The link with Brofoyedru School in Ghana was the driving force behind Queensferry's application for the International Schools Award. In the words of Michael O'Grady, Link Coordinator, they "used the ISA as a vehicle for the link, it gave it a purpose". The ISA was a natural progression for the school since they wanted to have recognition for their work with Ghana. It also helped Michael to pass on the ownership of the link to all other teachers. After working towards the award for a year and getting the children involved in seven different activities with an international theme, they finally obtained it in January 2009.



When Queensferry linked to Brofoyedru in February 2007 they had a simple aim: getting information flowing. However, now the link is embedded into the curriculum. When the pupils write real letters and postcards to their peers in Ghana "the link gives relevance to writing in the English lesson". Next semester Year 6 will be working on the link through the Geography module. The teachers have designed 10 lesson plans with the overall title "A locality in a less economically developed country". These lesson plans blend the learning objectives of the curriculum with information about life in Ghana, thus embedding the link in the curriculum.



"The link has created not only global links but also strong links with the community. It has opened the children's eyes to the wider world and has raised the profile of the school and the self-esteem of the whole community".

Michael believes that "the key is to get everyone involved". All the children at Queensferry do a piece of work at least once a year that is directly related to the link. In this way, not only does the link keep going and the children stay interested but also all the teachers become familiar with Brofoyedru School and involved at a basic level. The teachers of Year 6 however do a whole project on Ghana every year. In fact, the actual link has been core to how the school has developed towards Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship.

Michael spent 5 weeks at Brofoyedru School in 2006 as part of the Global Teachers Programme run by LCD and he has created great teaching materials with the videos and photos he took during his time in Ghana. He plays the videos for his pupils who get to see how life is at their partner school.

"I loved the fact that children in Ghana do the same things as we do: football, netball and their lessons. I think that having to clean the school as the pupils do is great; we should do it. I would like to go and visit them", says Megan (aged 10).

The link has already contributed to the school's Health and Nutrition objectives. Children exchanged postcards on healthy eating and their favourite food with their Ghanaian peers and they are now also looking into fair trade food products. Michael is aiming at purchasing only fairly traded fruits for the children, 43% of whom are entitled to free school meals.

LINK SCHOOLS PROGRAMME

CONTACT: Link Schools Programme, Link Community Development

Unit 39 Kings Exchange Business Village, Tileyard Road, London N7 9AH, UK

Tel: 020 7691 1818 Fax: 020 7209 4167 Email: linkschools@lcd.org.uk Website: www.lcd.org.uk



LOCAL AND GLOBAL LINKS ESTABLISHED – QUEENSFERRY CP SCHOOL IN WALES AND BROFOYEDRU SCHOOL IN GHANA

Despite having low attainment rates, Queensferry obtained “very good” and “outstanding” grades for their recent Ofsted inspection in 2009. The inspectors showed a lot of interest in the activities related to the link and reported that “Sustainable development is promoted extremely well and is an outstanding feature [...]. Global Citizenship is another outstanding feature of the school. Very close links have been established with schools in Poland and Ghana. Pupils regularly communicate with their counterparts in these schools, often discussing environmental as well as educational issues”.



The partnership with Brofoyedru brought also unexpected benefits to Queensferry, namely the creation of links with eight schools in the area, with the local supermarket and a local restaurant. Michael often visits other schools in the area; in particular he enjoys telling them about Ghana and about linking. The high school next door owns 20 Ghanaian drums and Queensferry does borrow them to teach the children to play.

The link is a catalyst which keeps everything together while at the same time the school's activities go in many different directions. The involvement in different activities has raised the school's profile within the community and some of the links created with local

business have even benefited the school financially.

The link has a really big impact on the school. At an individual level, the children become aware of fair trade and of healthy eating. They also realise the importance of education when seeing that other children don't have access to it. The link opens their understanding of social issues across the world and also makes them more aware of their own rights when looking for example at the issues like human rights. Because of economic circumstances children at Queensferry do not usually travel abroad. The link provides them with a vehicle to see the world and that is why it is so relevant.

Every summer Queensferry celebrates their Global Week and the local newspaper is invited to report on it. It was also the Global Week what started the link between the school and the local supermarket, which donated food from around the world to Queensferry for this particular celebration. World Book Day is also celebrated at Queensferry and is an occasion for the children to choose books from around the world and to dress up with clothes from other cultures.

Queensferry Primary School has achieved a number of awards, including the International School Award, the Eco-School Green Flag, Healthy Schools, Investor in People, Dyslexia Friendly School status and Basic Skills Quality Mark. They are now also starting to plan towards obtaining Fair Trade status.

Last summer the school started publishing their own newsletter, Queensferry Times. One of the students wrote an article on the link with Ghana on the first issue: “During the year all classes sent and received letters on the subject of sustainability – how we look after our world. We sent postcards to Gordon Brown to help all children in the world to go to school. We sent Brofoyedru a set of cards so they could send them to their Prime Minister”.

“The link with Ghana has been core to how the school has developed towards Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship. It has created not only global links but also strong links with the community. It has opened the children's eyes to the wider world and has raised the profile of the school and the self-esteem of the whole community”.

LINK SCHOOLS PROGRAMME

CONTACT: Link Schools Programme, Link Community Development

Unit 39 Kings Exchange Business Village, Tileyard Road, London N7 9AH, UK

Tel: 020 7691 1818 Fax: 020 7209 4167 Email: linkschools@lcd.org.uk Website: www.lcd.org.uk