



Case Study: Longniddry PS, East Lothian with Oranje-Diamant PS, NC, South Africa

CASE STUDIES

The following case study was written following an interview with Amanda Forgie (Global Teacher 2005), Catherine Jack (Headteacher) and Hilary Bell (Reciprocal Visitor in January 08) of Longniddry Primary School, and Desmond Botha and Johan Jacobs of Oranje-Diamant Primary School, Northern Cape, South Africa.

The school, which is currently in the first year of a 3 year Global Curriculum project grant from the Global Schools Partnership to work on joint curricular projects was chosen thanks to its extensive Global Citizenship work using the link and its successful integration of the link into the curriculum, thus making it a model Link School.

Background

Longniddry Primary School has been linked with Oranje-Diamant since October 2005 following Amanda Forgie's placement as a Global Teacher at Oranje-Diamant Primary School that year. Desmond Botha who has been at teacher at Oranje-Diamant for 7 years and Johan Jabobs who has been a teacher at the school for 18 years and is currently a grade 7 teacher were visiting their partner school Longniddry to learn about teaching strategies and to bring the South African culture alive for the pupils of Longniddry.

Motivations for setting up a link

There were several reasons following Amanda's experience in South Africa which compelled Longniddry Primary to make a link with Oranje-Diamant. Amanda Forgie relates that 'I was involved in a Global Citizenship working party within the school and I wanted to make Global Citizenship real for the pupils so that they would have something to compare things with. I also wanted to link at the end of my Global Teacher experience since I was welcomed so warmly at the South African school. The warmth of the South African teachers was huge so I was optimistic that the link would work. Back at home, the parents, teachers, Rotary club and church members were also all keen to link'.

Strong joint curricular projects

Longniddry has managed to successfully build the link around joint curricular projects which are of mutual benefit to the two schools. The focus has largely been on the eco-schools programme, Fair Trade, and the 'Health Week' and they have managed effectively to include all stages of the schools in the link:



From left - right: Desmond Botha, Amanda Forgie, Johan Jacobs



School display on link in entrance hall at Longniddry Primary School

- P2/3 is working with Grade 2 at Oranje-Diamant on a community project on a variety of cross-curricular ways. They are focusing on a seasonal link which would study the 4 seasons.
- P4 and grade 4 are studying rights and responsibilities by way of sharing Oxfam and UNICEF games. Longniddry Primary School is proud to be was one of the first schools in Scotland to receive the UNICEF 'Rights Respecting School Award' thanks to its work in this area.
- P6/7 and grade 6 are working on a sustainability project using webcams and email as part of their accredited eco-schools project. Longniddry has already received the 'green flag' which is the highest award level for their Eco-Schools work. The latest project involves pupils in groups making DVDs on water and Fair Trade without the help of their teachers, an activity which also contributes to their enterprise work. In this way they are raising awareness of the global themes of sustainability and interdependence.
- Another creative project is the 'On our doorstep' project which is a joint art project between P6, P7, Grade 6 and 7 which focuses on sharing, through artwork, the way we see ourselves and our surroundings in the world. In Longniddry this is being planned as an enterprising fundraising activity at the end of term as the artwork produced will go on display at the school and parents and members of the public will have the opportunity to buy it.
- All year groups: The schools are also linking their health topic with health week in June 2009 and as part of that they are running a joint 'fun run' at the same time at both schools. They are aiming to have a range of healthy activities going on in both schools during or around this week and afterwards they will share photos and experiences with the partner school and in this way they will be able to promote Healthy Living Values and perceptions (eating, exercise, hygiene) in both schools. Other ideas are to look at concepts such as 'food miles' and 'healthy attitudes to diet and exercise'.

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The schools are involved in an impressive number of joint projects but what is key is being able to link these projects to the curriculum areas and building on this. There are sometimes quiet stages in the life of the link, as well as some ups and downs, but Amanda feels that they are able to move from one idea to the next with ease and it is an obvious benefit that there is no language barrier between the two schools.

'It is really about enterprise teaching as pupils are involved in making videos, art projects, and recycled art work which is all cross curricular work'.

Impact on the curriculum, school ethos, teaching and learning

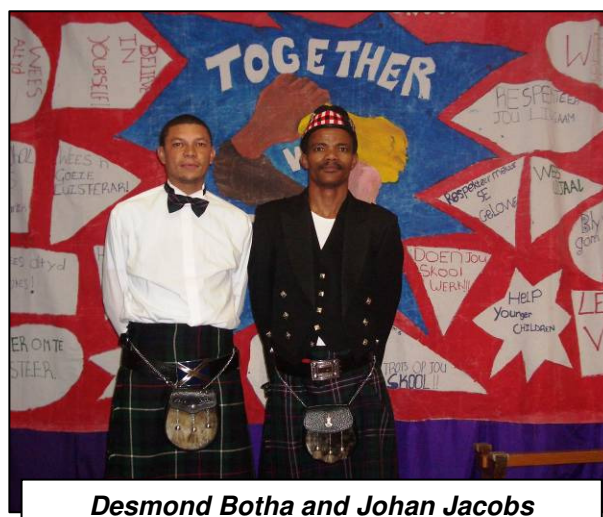
It is clear that the projects that the two schools are working on together fulfil Longniddry's school development plan aims as for example, the 'eco-schools' programme, which is designed to encourage whole-school action for the environment and is linked into curriculum areas in particular environmental studies, personal and social education, health and citizenship, as well as other

initiatives such as Enterprise and Health Promoting Schools, is part of their current development plan.

Amanda says, 'We sent out posters about saving the community and Oranje-Diamant sent back posters back about saving energy' as part of the '4 Ways to Help our Community' project. The Headteacher explains that 'it is really about enterprise teaching as pupils are involved in making videos, art projects, and recycled art work which is all cross curricular work'. Furthermore the children are so excited about it and they really 'have fun learning.'

For Desmond and Johan the partnership has brought many benefits including professional development opportunities and ways to improve the quality of their teaching which they can bring back to South Africa. Johan explains, 'We have learned about teaching methods and strategies used such as 'the book detectives' where each pupil takes on a role, ideas for our own fundraising such as the MacMillan cancer coffee mornings that Longniddry pupils organised that we could do with the elderly in our own community'.

The pupils at Oranje-Diamant have also been very interested to learn about life in other cultures, 'The link helps to ensure that we are creating global citizens of the future, as well as celebrating our diverse cultures. It also allows our learners to experience something outside of South Africa, and to share ideas and expertise from Scotland that we have been able to implement. The children enjoy learning from the link'.



Desmond Botha and Johan Jacobs

Desmond felt that there was a real problem of the lack of parental interest in his school and for this reason Oranje-Diamant has made involving the community one of their key aims and it is in their development plan for this year, 'Longniddry gave us some strategies for overcoming this like organising in-school activities which have made a real difference to the school'.

A real success story

The two schools feel that the reason the link is so successful is that it is based on friendship at the heart of it and there is good communication between the schools. In the 3 years it has been running it has really grown, and now there is not only one person organising all aspects; ownership of the link now belongs to the whole school. The school also has a linking committee which is made up of one P6 pupil, one P7 pupil, a parent, the Headteacher Mrs Jack, and two teachers, Hilary Bell and Amanda Forgie, the former Global Teacher dedicated to developing the link.

Community Involvement

Involvement in the link has spread to the wider community- pupils, parents, the church and community are all involved in the link and parental involvement is seen as key to its success. The local Church minister was so keen that the church Lent appeal was given over to the Link and they raised £900 for a Special Project with Oranje-Diamant some time ago. Amanda Forgie is also about to join an East Lothian working party on Global Citizenship, as a representative of the Prestonpans cluster.

Reciprocal Visit

The schools believe that the Global Curriculum project grant which the school received from the Global Schools Partnership was key to the link's development as it made them carry out dialogue with their partner school about what they wanted to achieve in the next few years.

The process of filling out the application form made them focus on the way forward and how they would achieve this. Visits are planned for the next 2 years between the schools which many staff are eager to take advantage of.

Future of the link

The two schools are never short of ideas for moving the link forward and taking the partnership to the next level in a creative way. Longniddry Primary School also has a link with a school in Italy and the two schools are discussing forming a 3 way link between Longniddry, Oranje-Diamant and the Italian school. The international links are always proudly prominent within the school and the South African art exhibition was on display when the Italian colleagues visited. Longniddry has ensured that this international focus will not end when the children leave primary school as they can continue the work at the local high school Preston Lodge who they collaborate with.