

# Learning outdoors

**International education:  
responsible, global citizens**



**HMIe**

improving Scottish education  
leasachadh foghlam na h-Alba



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## FOREWORD

Globalisation has transformed the way we live, learn and work. The pace of technological change, particularly the ease and speed of communication, has continued to accelerate. Scotland is increasingly enhanced by people from different countries, cultures and religions, and who speak languages other than English. Education must prepare young people to flourish in this new and changing world. If we are to achieve the Scottish Government's purpose of sustainable economic growth and compete successfully in world markets, young people must develop an awareness of global issues and events, and the skills and confidence to be effective contributors in an increasingly global society.

*Curriculum for Excellence: Building the Curriculum 3: A Framework for Learning and Teaching* outlines important messages for those involved in planning the curriculum for children and young people. It states that: "All children and young people in Scotland have an entitlement to a curriculum which will develop knowledge and understanding of society, the world and Scotland's place in it so that they can develop well-informed views and act responsibly." Learning in an international context is an essential dimension of the broad general education which is designed to equip young people to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

In 2003, HMIE published *How good is our school?: international education*. Since then, there has been very substantial progress in how many schools and their partners are approaching learning in an international context. Some outstanding examples of this work are illustrated in this publication. As you will see, young people's lives are being transformed through these experiences. The work shows that, at its best, a curriculum which includes planned opportunities for learning in an international context can enable children and young people to become more outward looking and confident about themselves and their nation, be more skilled and competent users of world languages, develop an evolving, informed world view and an understanding of Scotland's place in it, learn about and understand other cultures and religions at first hand, and participate as active, responsible global citizens.

Scotland's future economic prosperity requires an education system within which the population as a whole will develop the kind of knowledge, skills and attributes which will equip them personally, socially and economically to thrive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. As this guide shows, many Scottish schools are already grasping the opportunity of *Curriculum for Excellence* to develop high quality learning experiences in international contexts. I hope this guide will help us to turn this aspiration into reality for all young people in Scotland.

**Graham HC Donaldson**  
**HM Senior Chief Inspector**



## 1. Introduction

This guide is part of the *Learning together* series which aims to support schools<sup>1</sup> and centres as they implement *Curriculum for Excellence*. It aims to help teachers<sup>2</sup> reflect on and improve their practice in international education. Inspectors have visited a number of schools and centres, and worked with a wide range of practitioners and stakeholders to develop this resource. We hope that the examples of good practice provided in this guide will stimulate professional discussion about how to improve the curriculum to prepare young people for life in an ever-changing, globalised society.

International education enriches young people's<sup>3</sup> experiences within curriculum areas and interdisciplinary learning. It enhances the ethos and life of the school as a community. It provides a wide range of opportunities for personal achievement. The contribution of international education to these four contexts for learning will be explored in more depth in section 4.

Reflective questions on using the seven *Curriculum for Excellence* design principles to improve international education can be found on page 27.

International education contributes to the development of skills and capabilities which children and young people must have for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It permeates the experiences and outcomes in all subject areas within *Curriculum for Excellence*. Examples of *Curriculum for Excellence* Experiences and Outcomes with an international dimension can be found in Appendix 2.



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<sup>1</sup> Where we use 'schools' we mean schools, early learning centres or other establishments where children and young people learn.

<sup>2</sup> The term 'teacher' or 'staff' in this document is used we mean early years practitioners, local authority staff, student teachers, initial teacher education staff, further education staff and teaching staff in schools.

<sup>3</sup> In this guide, the terms *learners*, *children*, *young people* are used to describe all of those engaged in the learning process as appropriate to sector or service, as distinct from practitioners or professionals who provide the service.



## 2. Leading and Developing international education

Young people growing up in the 21<sup>st</sup> century will face unprecedented and as yet unrecognised challenges posed by fast and far-reaching changes around the world. International education will help to ensure that young people are fully prepared for life in a global society. Leaders in many schools help to ensure that international education is an integral part of the ethos of the school and that it is sustained and developed across all areas of the establishment's life and work.

### Developing the vision

International education is central to one secondary school's vision of developing the attributes and capabilities of the four capacities within a global context. This important element is incorporated within the school improvement plan and involves teachers from all curriculum areas. Through their work in innovative, international learning contexts, young people are developing skills in team working, decision making and personal responsibility as well as increasing their confidence and their motivation for learning. For example, they worked with young people in their partner Norwegian and Czech schools to create ceramic murals, tapestries and other art works focused on the themes of diversity and inclusion.

A strong vision for international education includes enhancing the experiences of all children and young people within the school, not just a few who have the opportunity to take part in one-off, special projects or trips abroad.

### International learning across all programmes and courses

Across one secondary school, many subjects have incorporated successfully an international dimension within their programmes. For example, in geography, young people in S2 participate in collaborative online activities to research and compare the impact of deforestation in different parts of the world. The school's Dynamic Youth Award accredits the skills that young people gain through these activities. The art department has maintained a Comenius link with Madeira as an inspiration for learning in different curriculum areas, including citizenship, enterprise, tourism and health promotion.

With a clear, shared vision for international education, all staff, children and young people have opportunities to take on leadership roles to promote and develop learning and to act as ambassadors for their country.

Teachers who lead aspects of international education are often well placed to make better connections across the curriculum. They can share ideas, skills and knowledge with colleagues in their own school and within partner schools around the world. This makes learning more relevant and linked to real life contexts.



### Teachers leading learning

One primary school has developed strong links with a school in South Africa. Staff from each school have visited their respective partner schools and speak very positively about the benefits. Teachers' confidence in the area of global citizenship has increased as a result of sharing knowledge and ideas. A teacher stated: *'Planning for international education should be part of our normal preparation for topics and lessons in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Most pieces of learning are related to our international link to give them an extra dimension and make the learning more meaningful. It helps that the children know the people. They are real children with names, faces, homes, families, dreams and ambitions. We don't use resources which reinforce stereotypes of what life is like in Africa.'*

In examples of effective practice, children and young people are motivated, engaged and enthusiastic about taking on leadership roles in international education.



### Empowering children – shared aims, values and skills for success

One primary school wanted to update its vision, values and aims and affirm its strong commitment to international education. All members of the school community discussed the skills they want children to develop to be successful. The skills include: determination, self-confidence, decision-making, problem solving, independence, risk taking, group working and creativity. Children are now able to relate the complex world issues they have studied through international learning to their own life experiences. They show good insight when reflecting on their learning.



## Young people leading global learning

In one secondary school, a group of young people worked with their peers from partner schools around the world to undertake an international research assignment, visiting each country and making comparisons. The research focused on the future of education. The group learned about a range of research strategies. They learned about how to work together and about the benefits of different education systems. They formed a global learning school community and collaborated with young people, teachers, parents and carers around the world. They created a DVD summarising their findings which represents a powerful resource for the development of learning and teaching worldwide.





### 3. Learning and achieving through international education

International education provides a wide range of opportunities for learning and personal achievement. It contributes effectively to the development of the attributes and capabilities underpinning the four capacities of *Curriculum for Excellence*.

<p>Successful Learners</p> <p><b>with</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; openness to new thinking and ideas</li> </ul> <p><b>and able to</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; use technology for learning</li> </ul>	<p>Confident Individuals</p> <p><b>with</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; secure values and beliefs</li> </ul> <p><b>and able to</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; develop and communicate their own beliefs and view of the world</li> </ul>
<p>Responsible Citizens</p> <p><b>with</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; respect for others</li> <li>&gt; commitment to participate responsibly in political, economic, social and cultural life</li> </ul> <p><b>and able to</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; develop knowledge and understanding of the world and Scotland's place in it</li> <li>&gt; understand different beliefs and cultures</li> <li>&gt; evaluate environmental, scientific and technological issues</li> <li>&gt; develop informed, ethical views of complex issues</li> </ul>	<p>Effective Contributors</p> <p><b>with</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; an enterprising attitude</li> <li>&gt; self-reliance</li> </ul> <p><b>and able to</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; communicate in different ways and in different settings</li> <li>&gt; work in partnership and in teams</li> </ul>

Children and young people are challenged and motivated by high quality learning experiences which have an international context. They are becoming aware that global issues are highly relevant to their future lives and therefore understand the purpose of their learning. Children and young people also report that they often develop advanced skills in communication through linking with people from different countries. Such skills include verbal and non-verbal communication, skills in presenting, and use of information and communications technology (ICT).



### **International learning and achievement in pre-school**

In one nursery, the eTwinning programme has been used to link with a pre-school centre in Italy. Children exchanged soft toys which went on imaginary adventures around each other's community. Children widened their understanding of the world around them through topics such as: myself, my family and my community. As they learned about their own community, they made simple comparisons with life in Italy. They developed their communication and language skills further through emailing and exchanging photographs and stories about the adventures of the characters. Learning was extended through shared story-making. For example, 'what would each of the soft toy characters eat in the country they were visiting?'

### **Developing an informed world view**

One secondary school has been linked a school in Tanzania since 1987, and several exchange visits have taken place. More recently, staff in both schools identified the need to develop the global dimension across the curriculum through cooperative working and a sharing of knowledge, skills, values and perspectives. This development has been funded for three years by a project grant awarded by the Department for International Development. Exploring complex issues together and being able to ask questions helps young people become successful learners. The Tanzanian perspective has helped young people consider how they can, as responsible citizens, participate in political, economic, social and cultural life in their own community, in Scotland and globally. Young people have become more confident when tackling or taking a stance on issues such as social justice and the environment. As they become aware of the resilience, self-reliance and enterprising attitude of their partners in Tanzania, they have reflected on their own attitudes and values and what they need to become effective contributors.

### **Sharing learning and achievements at local authority level**

In one local authority, children involved in international education came together for a learning conference. They discussed what they had learned and how their attitudes and outlook had changed as a result of what they had learned. They shared their successes in mixed groups from different schools and created posters to summarise their learning in all aspects of international education. They discussed what they got out of the learning and the benefits of being involved.

Technologies have opened up dramatically the accessibility of aspects of international education for all learners. Many schools use online communication technologies and social networking tools to enhance learning in international contexts and to bring the world into their classrooms. They make effective use of blogging, podcasting, secure chat rooms, videoconferencing and email. As advances are made at unprecedented rates, technologies will continue to be an essential tool for developing international learning.



### **Using ICT and international contexts to enhance personal and social education**

Young people in one secondary school have been involved in eTwinning links with schools in other countries. They have communicated successfully with the twinned schools using blogs, podcasts, email, and PowerPoint presentations. For the theme “What does it mean to be...” young people have shared photographs with their international partners and stated what they see as the key features of their own culture. As a result, they have developed an understanding of the similarities and differences between their own and other cultures from a teenager’s perspective. For example, in one project, young people in Malta noticed from the background in photographs that it was snowing in Scotland. They had never experienced snow. The project evolved into a powerful exchange of experiences about climate and lifestyle. A class teacher stated, *‘There is only so much I can show and tell; the real youngsters in other countries are so much more convincing than a text book or a teacher.’* As a result of the success of this project and the positive impact and outcomes for young people, all courses for personal and social education have been updated to include an international dimension. Levels of student interest and motivation have risen significantly as a result.

Learning and achievement in curriculum areas and subjects can be enriched through international learning. For example, language learning can be significantly enhanced by working with partners in other countries. This gives a real life context for learning and can increase motivation by connecting young people with native speakers.



## Progression in language learning using technologies

As part of the Franco-Scottish cooperation agreement<sup>4</sup>, one primary school aimed to develop children's language learning in French by communicating with native French speakers. Links have been formed with schools in France and blogs and podcasts are used to develop children's skills in reading, writing, talking and listening. Shared themes for learning have been agreed between the two schools. This has been built into a revised progressive programme of language learning from P4-7. Children in each country share expertise in their own language with each other. Comments from the children included:

*'This has been life changing. I have really enjoyed making new friends in France and my vocabulary and accent have really improved.'*

*'We learned more French as we went along and this was a really fun and exciting way to learn with real people for real reasons!'*

The school is expanding the learning by forming a Glow group. This means that children can continue learning French outwith school hours and collaborate with others, including their parents and children from different schools.

Learning another language is an essential part of international education. In doing so, children and young people gain a deeper understanding of their first language and the difficulties that others have to overcome to learn that language. They enhance their understanding and enjoyment of other cultures and of their own and gain insights into other ways of thinking and other views of the world. Through learning other languages, children and young people may become active global citizens. Children and young people can develop an understanding of sensitive issues through international education. The ways in which different countries and cultures respond to issues such as diversity and equality motivate children and young people to reflect on their own experiences and values.



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<sup>4</sup> In 2004, to commemorate the centenary of the Entente Cordiale between the United Kingdom and France, the Scottish Government signed an agreement with the French Ministry of National Education, Higher Education and Research to strengthen educational cooperation and encourage the exchange of good practice.



### Exploring conflict

In one primary school, children in P7 were exploring the rights and wrongs of war. To do this they worked successfully with children from other countries. The headteacher commented on the experiences that the children were gaining from this: *'Our link school in Lebanon was shut due to political unrest. Our children are now more aware of world news and come to school telling teachers about what has been reported, genuinely concerned for the welfare of their virtual classmates. Then they get back in touch with them a few days later and get a first hand account of events. You can plan it into the curriculum structure, then let the children take ownership.'* This work also deepened children's understanding of human rights, and the rights of the child under the UN convention. They reflected on the impact of war on human rights.

Across Scotland, there is an increasing commitment to improving the achievements and life opportunities for the most vulnerable learners. International education can provide a fresh way to help children and young people at risk of missing out on education to learn and achieve further. It can provide a real life context for their learning and help them make connections across the curricular areas.

### More choices and more chances through international education

International education has been used to motivate and inspire a group of young people with social and emotional barriers to learning in one secondary school. The real life challenge of building a fence and a vegetable garden for an orphanage in South Africa was used as the context for organising learning for the group. They worked towards the challenge in different subjects, learning skills for life and skills for work. For example, in mathematics, they calculated the perimeter of the orphanage and the quantities of materials needed. In science, they learned about plant growth and the impact of the climate. The interdisciplinary learning included spending two weeks building the fence and garden while living and working in South Africa. Many of the young people found this experience to be life changing and all of them said that their outlook on life became more positive as a direct result of the experience. Their behaviour improved and they now have more choices for future careers and had more chances to experience success and develop their self-esteem by making a real contribution. They said:

*'I appreciate all the chances I get in my school better now. You see the problems that other people face and it makes you think about yourself differently.'*

*'I am now more confident to go out and get a job. You realise you have skills to offer that can be really useful to people.'*

*'I choose to come to school now and really value the chances we get in life'*

A key feature of good practice in developing international education is seeking and acting on the views of children and young people, parents and partners in the wider community. In many schools, the views of learners have influenced decisions about specific content, about how they will learn and the actions that they can take.



The following quotations demonstrate motivating, challenging and enjoyable experiences which young people have had through international education.

*The world is not big. We went round the world in the nursery. We learned about Italy and what children do in their nursery. We learned songs and stories. We say words they know. We like Glasgow but we like Milan too! (Pre-school child)*

*We learn with children all over the world using the internet. We do group work, workshops, assemblies, research projects, interviews with people. Some of the teachers and children learn by visiting the countries. We learn other languages and through all our subjects, even areas like PE when we did a world dance festival. When we learned a Maltese dance and children in Malta learned the Gay Gordons. We helped each other! (P7 pupil)*

*These projects have really helped us to get to grips with the challenges the world will face in the future, for example, saving the environment, human rights and equalities, economic growth. (S5 student)*

*As part of our international exchange, we get to live in the community and really understand what is it like to live there. That's one of the best learning experiences, rather than just visiting the area. (S4 student)*



#### 4. International education within the curriculum

In examples of successful practice, schools have planned for international education across all four contexts<sup>5</sup> for learning. International education is a theme which enhances and enriches the day-to-day learning experiences of children and young people and should be used to promote coherence between different areas of learning. These schools recognise the importance of planning to ensure that children and young people are making suitable progress in their learning.

##### Planning for progression and coherence

One secondary school is developing young people's awareness of global events successfully through its Comenius projects and improvements across the curriculum. The headteacher has incorporated the work of the Eco schools group within international education to increase coherence and progression of young people's learning experiences. Within international education, the school's focus is on ensuring progression in young people's learning and recognising the skills and attributes to be developed. Staff have done this by evaluating the outcomes of all international learning and planning for them within a clear, progressive framework. A new definition of international education has been agreed which includes many themes which were previously seen as separate components, such as global citizenship, sustainability and equality and diversity. The headteacher stated, '*International education is not a discrete subject. It is a pervasive context for developing a set of skills, attitudes and values. We will do this by building on the outcomes in a planned, coherent and explicit way.*'



<sup>5</sup> *Curriculum for Excellence: Building the Curriculum 3: A Framework for Learning and Teaching* defines the four aspects as: ethos and life of the school as a community; curriculum areas and subjects; interdisciplinary learning; and opportunities for personal achievement.



### **A modern, progressive global curriculum**

One small three class primary school is helping children understand of their place in the world through effective curriculum planning. At the early stages, far-away places meant little to the children so initially the teacher formed a partnership with a school in Ireland and exchanged lesson ideas and children's work. Now the school is linked with partner schools in Poland and Pakistan. Each project that the children study has international links and these are used to make connections across curriculum areas. For example, children made graphs using the internet showing the weather in each of these countries, and sorted out children's clothes suitable for the weather in each country. At the upper stages, the children used the school's international links as part of more independent approaches to learning. They linked by videoconference with peers in the USA during the 2008 presidential election to discuss why they supported particular candidates. The class teacher stated, *'Children are spontaneously interested in world events now. Parents tell us, sometimes with some annoyance, that their children turn the TV over to watch the news, and can explain to them what's happening in Darfur, Iraq and Afghanistan and why.'*

### *Ethos and life of the school as a community*

Where international education is strong, it is central to a school's values and supports positive relationships across the school community, including parents. It provides children and young people with opportunities to contribute to the life and work of the school and, from the earliest stages, to exercise their responsibilities as members of a global community. This includes opportunities to participate responsibly in decision-making, to contribute as leaders and role models, offer support and service to others and play an active part in putting the values of the school community into practice. Children and young people are also developing their own values and world view through reflecting on international learning and comparing their own experiences with those of young people around the world.

### **Teachers and young people working together to improve learning**

International education permeates one secondary school's improvement plan. It is key to the ethos of the school and is planned for in a coherent way across the curriculum. An international coordinator works with an 'International Education Team' consisting of representatives from ten subject departments as well as young people from the student council. Together, they have developed, monitored and evaluated the numerous international projects across the school. All teachers are including international aspects within their teaching approaches for their subject area. In discussions, teachers were enthusiastic, committed and stated that it was important for all young people to know about global issues and international matters. All staff are trying to create an awareness of the world and to celebrate and respect the cultural diversity represented in their school and community.



### **International education as part of children's day-to-day learning experiences**

One primary school produces an electronic calendar of major world events. This enables staff to make links with key events and developments and relate these to children's learning where relevant. Staff also take account of news from across the world and give children opportunities to explore this. This enhances children's day-to-day learning and helps them to understand and debate world events in relation to their own experiences, values and attitudes.

#### *Curriculum areas and subjects*

All curriculum areas and subjects are enriched through a global dimension. *Curriculum for Excellence* experiences and outcomes set out specific aspects of learning which will have an international dimension. In addition, the experiences and outcomes offer many opportunities where an international context might be used to motivate and challenge children and young people and meet their learning needs better.





### **Enhancing courses through a global dimension**

The use of global issues as a context for developing language skills is embedded in English courses at all stages in one secondary school. Literary texts set in other countries or with a global focus are built into courses and promoted as texts for personal study. Learning activities include research on other countries for the S1 library skills unit. An S2 media unit, *Life in Africa*, looks at the impact of the media on perceptions of Africa using newspaper stories, advertisements for charities, maps and photographs. Young people then produce a report or a presentation for assembly. Other learning activities include a unit on child labour for Standard Grade and Intermediate courses, *The Silent Genocide*, which used the school's Malawi link to explore the HIV/AIDS pandemic. For Higher English, young people looked at the impact of the chocolate trade in West Africa. These learning activities require collaboration and have helped young people to develop further their skills in writing and talking for different purposes. In addition, they have developed enterprise skills through fundraising and awareness raising, for example, writing to newspapers and politicians. Young people have found these real tasks and audiences very motivating.

### *Interdisciplinary learning*

*Curriculum for Excellence: Building the Curriculum 3: A Framework for Learning and Teaching* states that 'the curriculum should include space for learning beyond subject boundaries, so that children and young people can make connections between different areas of learning. Interdisciplinary studies can also take advantage of opportunities to work with partners who are able to offer and support enriched learning experiences and opportunities for young people's wider involvement in society.' Some interdisciplinary projects can become more relevant for children and young people through a strong international dimension. This can help teachers to provide challenging, enjoyable learning experiences for all children and young people.

### **An international dimension for interdisciplinary studies**

In one primary school, teachers reviewed their current projects using the *Curriculum for Excellence* design principles. As part of this improvement process, they added an international dimension to enhance the children's experiences and their knowledge and understanding. For example, a P6 social subjects project on food became interdisciplinary learning called 'the world food factory' which included themes such as interdependence, fair trade, climate change and the impact on food production. This culminated in a world food conference where children took on different roles and perspective and debated the future of world trade.



### *Opportunities for personal achievement*

International education enables children and young people to build their confidence, gain new skills and take on responsibilities. They can develop their leadership skills through working on fundraising and other international learning. They are also broadening their horizons and understanding of other beliefs and cultures through taking part in international exchanges and trips. They develop their awareness of world environmental issues further through taking part in Eco Schools activities.

#### **Personal achievement through an international Eco Schools focus**

Staff and children in one primary school were keen to work together with other schools to improve sustainability and work towards Eco-Schools Scotland status. Recognising that Eco-Schools Scotland is a world wide scheme, the school linked with partners in other countries and they all worked towards their Eco-Schools Scotland green flag together, sharing their progress through the use of emails, blogs and video conferencing. Through collaborating with children in other countries and sharing ideas, children learned about how they could make a real difference to conserving resources and protecting the planet.





## 5. Scotland's place in the world

*Curriculum for Excellence: Building the Curriculum 3: A Framework for Learning and Teaching* states that: 'Throughout this broad curriculum it is expected there will be an emphasis on Scottish contexts, Scottish cultures and Scotland's history and place in the world'.

The curriculum must therefore enable young people to develop their own identity and an understanding of the national identity of Scotland, in terms of history, culture, achievements, language and local dialects. It should help young people to understand Scotland's place within the world now and possible contributions in the future. This focus on Scottish contexts and their connections with UK, European and the wider world helps young people to understand the stories of people in locations different from their own, in a reasoned, informed and balanced way. Appreciating and understanding the customs, traditions and choices of people around the world can also deepen young people's understanding of their own values.

### Understanding Scotland's place in the world

One secondary school has created a global network of students who are learning a number of subjects together. They are solving problems in lessons by working together using video conferencing technology. Teachers and students in international partner schools share their expertise and lead different aspects of learning. Students have developed a range of skills for work and skills for life as well as a view of Scotland and its place in the world. This includes skills in communicating, presenting, negotiating and interpreting. Students' learning experiences have been enriched due to the international perspective permeating the entire curriculum. One S6 student said: *'This work has changed our lives forever. We have the confidence and skills to succeed in whichever path we choose. I believe that who we are is the way we see the world. We are constantly challenged to see the world in different ways'.*





Children and young people who experience high quality international education often talk about the impact this has on their view of Scotland and the wider world:

*'You realise that the world is quite a small place and we can go to other parts of the world and learn and work in the future' (P6 pupil)*

*'I am proud of what Scotland has achieved to help the world to be a better place. But we can still learn lots of new things from other countries' (P7 pupil)*

*'Scotland is small but has done big things for the world. I am really proud of that and want that to carry on in the future when I grow up' (P7 pupil)*





## 6. Partnerships for international learning: helping young people to become responsible, global citizens

Many schools have developed international links with schools in Europe and beyond. These links have been a useful starting point for international education but are sometimes limited in scope, difficult to sustain and have benefited only a few children and young people. The key challenge for schools is to ensure that the initial links move on to become longer-term partnerships, which enhance the learning experiences of all children and young people.

### Establishing a global partnership

One primary school set out to establish partnerships with other countries which would provide insight and learning opportunities for children, parents and staff. Initially, the school emailed a school in Estonia. The British Council helped it make links with other countries through funding a Comenius project, '*Culture Connects Children*'. Staff participated in opportunities for professional development and cross-cultural dialogue through visits to member countries. Families learned together through lively international family evenings. Children and their families learned about their own culture and the cultures of Estonia, Catalonia, Iceland and Finland. They were able to tell children from other countries about Scotland.



Schools across Scotland have developed partnerships with colleagues, children, young people and families from around the globe to enrich and extend their learning. This provides useful contexts for learning about cultures, customs and lifestyles of different nations and communities. It is a useful, first hand approach for challenging stereotypes and encouraging young people to explore, compare and contrast their own values and lifestyles with those of their international counterparts. Circumstances and opportunities can vary significantly. Partnerships with schools in other countries provide a first hand, direct, 'live' resource for schools to explore and discuss world issues and events. Children and young people often report that the issues and challenges facing their peers around the world are similar.



### **Enriching learning in literacy and the expressive arts through a global partnership**

Young people in the drama department of one secondary school worked with another school in the United States of America. The topic was *'Across the Pond'*, as part of which young people simultaneously wrote and staged plays based around the events of 9/11 and 7/7, using live links and chat rooms during rehearsals. Young people from both schools discussed their views of the circumstances surrounding these events and the impact on the world. They also shared information about what they knew, what the media reported and what they thought now. The outcomes from the discussions between the young people represented a very powerful understanding of different perspectives, bias and the influence of media. One young person stated: *'It was amazing to think of the others so far away but doing the same.'*

In the most successful examples, the schools communicate regularly through a variety of methods, including technologies, to learn together and share different aspects of learning. A dynamic, ongoing partnership which is seen as a key resource for learning, greatly enhances young people's knowledge and global awareness. This high level of interaction and innovative use of technology often reflects young people's use of social communication and networking outwith school.



### Using technologies to develop and maintain the links

The children at one primary school are working successfully with five partner schools on a variety of activities which are enhancing their learning. These include environmental studies and eTwinning. The outcomes for children include, for example, an understanding of the impact of weather and climate on living things in different parts of the world, through discussing and comparing evidence and experiences with children in partner schools. Children at P6 and staff have established an informative blog and a wiki space to stay in contact with the various partner schools.

Schools across Scotland are at different stages in ensuring that international partnerships enhance learning to their full potential. Many schools undertake one-off fundraising projects in response to charity campaigns. These experiences help children and young people to develop their understanding of sustainability and issues of equality and diversity. They often do not build on children's and young people's prior learning. In the best examples, schools build on these one-off projects to ensure progression beyond the event and develop a shared focus for learning with a partner school.





### **Partnerships for learning – moving beyond one-way fundraising**

One primary school has formed a link with a primary school in Tanzania. At first, the focus of activities was on fundraising in order to buy supplies and equipment for the school. The partnership has now been extended and is enhancing children's learning in a number of areas. The school has explored diversity and equality issues through the expressive arts. Specific focus weeks have enabled children to learn about other cultures in depth and connect learning across curriculum areas. Staff have taken part in extended exchange visits and discussed aspects of culture, curriculum and history. The partnership has recently been strengthened through e-mail links to the partner primary school. This has led to a wide range of outcomes for children. As well as a deeper understanding of cultures, lifestyles and traditions of other countries, children can compare and contrast the impact of environmental improvement on people around the world. Children's literacy skills, such as developing an informed view, distinguishing fact from opinion and recognising the influence of different sources, have all improved significantly through this real-life context.

### **A shared focus for learning**

One primary school used links with partner schools across the world to enable on-going dialogue between children about learning. The partner schools were based in Europe, Africa and Asia. They discussed and agreed a shared focus for learning on health and fitness, culminating in a virtual sports day in which all the schools took part. This increased children's motivation as they competed with children around the world in the sporting events. At the end of the event they developed important numeracy skills by organising, displaying and interpreting the results.

In some of the most effective examples of international education, schools develop a collaborative learning partnership where they learn together, with teachers and young people from different countries leading different aspects of learning. In one example, young people from different countries completed peer book reviews, reading the same texts in their respective native languages and discussing and learning about the text together through videoconferencing, blogging and individual partnerships between learners and teachers.



### **Moving from a link to a living resource for learning**

The staff in one secondary school wanted to refresh the links with schools in other countries, and communicate with them more regularly as part of programmes and courses in the curriculum, rather than just about general customs, lifestyles and events. The student council did an audit of the impact of the links and found it was all fairly superficial, for example comparing the weather at different times of the year. They brainstormed the ways they could use technologies, including social networking, to keep the dialogue going between the schools and deepen and extend their learning in specific areas. They set the challenge to teachers on an in-service day to use the school's links as a resource to improve programmes in S1-3. The school now has a diverse, rich resource for learning which is used in all subject areas. Young people set up websites with communication tools and they call these their 'living textbooks' !

Many schools use their partnerships to offer exchange programmes, where groups of children and young people benefit from the actual experience of living and learning in another country. Such opportunities for immersion in the culture and lifestyle of other countries often has a profound effect on their outlook and view of the world.

### **Working towards an exchange**

Each year, young people at S5 and S6 take on a penfriend at their partner school in Kenya and write to them regularly. The school recently welcomed two Kenyan girls to Scotland to raise awareness of a new venture called Johari, where the girls ran a shop to sell the dresses they make after graduating. Young people raised significant funds to make this happen. They applied and further developed skills in numeracy to organise and manage their business enterprise.

When children and young people are fortunate enough to visit other countries, this experience can be used as a powerful resource from which the whole school can learn.

### **Using children's international experiences of young people as a dynamic resource for learning**

One primary school was offered the chance to become part of the local high school's 'Living locally: Learning globally' programme in 2007. Pupils in P7 made a request for visiting Japanese students to assist in their study on Japan. With none available, a suggestion came back for two children and the class teacher to accompany high school staff on their visit to Japan. The children created video clips and a website to record their experiences and reported live to the whole school during an assembly. As a result, the whole school gained a greater knowledge of the customs and culture of another country through first hand experience.



Partnerships can also be used to help children and young people to develop their skills in other languages. They can learn about accent and pronunciation and extend their vocabulary through working directly with native speakers. Children and young people report that this can be a very valuable and motivating way to enrich their language learning and improve their proficiency. Talking to native speakers can be very challenging, enjoyable and provide a real purpose for practising and refining language skills.

### **Extending language skills through international links**

One secondary school has established a productive partnership with the Goethe Institut in Glasgow. Through this partnership, young people at all stages benefit from increased opportunities to practise their language speaking skills and to attend cultural activities. In 2008, three senior pupils attended a summer language immersion school in Germany. Materials which they brought back with them have enhanced the learning experiences of all young people studying German in the school. Forty pupils in S1 recently benefited from attending a book launch hosted by a leading German author. This experience enhanced their appreciation of real German texts and encouraged young people to read for enjoyment more often as part their language studies. Levels of motivation and learner engagement increased.

Children and young people who have English as an additional language can provide rich opportunities for their peers to learn about different languages and customs through discussion and sharing experiences. Successful schools work in partnership with children and young people and their families to support their development of English and to learn more about their native language.

### **Embracing the language and culture of young people from across the globe**

Following the opening of a new factory near one secondary school, a large number of families moved in from Poland. The school enrolled 23 new children over a three month period. Staff recognised this as a great enrichment to the school community. Young people had the opportunity to learn about Poland and some Polish language. Children explored the similarities and differences between English and Polish, and their respective customs and cultures in depth. Polish families said they could not believe the warmth and extent of the welcome they received, and the ways that the school embraced and celebrated their background.

Schools who are developing international education successfully across the curriculum often work with local as well as international partners. They work with community learning and development partners to offer a range of out-of-class learning opportunities which have an international dimension. Other schools work with partners from different agencies or other local schools on an international aspect of the curriculum.





## 7. Summary - moving forward

- We have found many exciting, innovative and inspiring approaches to international education in Scottish schools. These activities are enriching the learning and development of children and young people throughout the country. For some young people, their experiences of learning in an international context have been life changing.
- There is an emerging understanding that international education encompasses global citizenship, learning other world languages, sustainable development, issues of equality, diversity and human rights, and international partnerships. These important aspects provide opportunities for children and young people growing up in Scotland to:
  - be outward looking and confident about themselves and their nation and be able to compete more successfully in global markets;
  - become more skilled and confident users of world languages;
  - develop an evolving, informed world view and an understanding of Scotland's place in it;
  - respond and adapt to the challenges presented by globalisation;
  - learn about and understand other cultures, religions, circumstances and environments, through contact with their peers;
  - actively promote environmental improvement within an international context; and
  - participate as active, responsible global citizens.
- Learning in an international context is an essential part of *Curriculum for Excellence*. International education enriches young people's experiences within curriculum areas and in interdisciplinary learning. It can enhance the ethos and life of the school as a community. It provides a rich seam of opportunities for personal achievement. It is a key dimension of the broad general education to which all children and young people aged 3 to 15 are entitled. It should also be an essential part of the senior phase in secondary school, at college and in other settings, for all young people.
- To achieve this requires leadership which ensures a clear vision for the curriculum more widely and of the contributions which international education can make to learning and development. There is a need to continue to develop to the stage where each child experiences all the aspects of international education in a progressive, coherent and relevant way.
- Some of the most successful examples in this guide show technologies being very well used to enrich learning in international contexts. Through communicating with



their peers in other parts of the world, children and young people can learn together effectively and deepen their understanding of different life experiences. Communication technologies can also deepen and extend language learning. As technologies advance it will be easier to communicate in innovative ways, further extending the range of opportunities for connections and partnership working around the world.

- Well-judged partnerships with schools in other countries are, and will continue to be, an important part of international education. The best practice goes well beyond one-off events and international visits (which often benefit only a few young people and do not always promote progression in learning). Most of the international partnerships featured in this guide currently involve schools in Europe and Africa. There is scope to increase links with schools in these and other parts of the world, to promote further understanding of different cultures and mutual respect amongst young people.

Appendix 2 contains reflective questions relating to key quality indicators and the design principles of *Curriculum for Excellence*, to help teachers to reflect on their current provision and identify ways to improve and extend learning in international contexts. There are further examples of good practice on the Learning and Teaching Scotland website. HMIE will continue to gather examples of good practice and share these through *The Journey to Excellence* website.





## **Appendix 1: reflective questions**

### **Achievement and outcomes for children and young people**

- To what extent do children and young people exercise responsibility and contribute to the life of the school and the wider community through international contexts?
- What examples do we have of children and young people developing their confidence and becoming more personally and socially adept through international education?
- What proportion of our children and young people have participated in international projects, trips and exchanges and how have they benefited?

### **Learners' experiences**

- To what extent are children and young people motivated by their experiences in international education?
- What progress are children and young people making in international education?
- Do children and young people know what knowledge, skills and attributes they should be developing in international education? Do they know how to improve?
- What outcomes can children and young people demonstrate as a result of these activities?
- How have we used international education to engage learners at risk of missing out?
- Do we seek the views of learners about international education and are their views acted upon?
- How do we use technologies to enable children and young people to experience international education?

### **Working with and engaging the wider community**

- To what extent do children, young people and teachers link with schools overseas? What impact have these links had?
- What international partnerships have we formed and how have they benefited staff, children and young people?
- How do we educate our learners for sustainability and prepare them for global citizenship? How will we know if we have been successful?



## **The curriculum**

- Where does learning through international contexts feature in our curriculum? Can we build in better opportunities?
- What use do we make of local and national advice on international education to improve our curriculum?
- How is our curriculum assisting children and young people to develop as responsible, global citizens?

## ***Curriculum for Excellence* design principles**

The following key questions relating to the *Curriculum for Excellence* design principles can help schools review and plan for improvements to international education.

### *Challenge and enjoyment*

- How can we enhance enjoyment and motivation through an international dimension to learning?

### *Breadth*

- To what extent does international education enhance the experiences of children and young people across all four contexts for learning?

### *Progression*

- Are children and young people given opportunities to explore increasingly complex global issues in a coherent and well planned way as they move through school? Are all activities planned with progression in learning in mind?

### *Depth*

- Where do we offer opportunities for children and young people to explore complex global issues in depth?

### *Personalisation and Choice*

- Is there enough flexibility to respond to the interests and concerns of children and young people on global issues or events?
- Can children and young people learn a range of different languages?

### *Coherence*

- Can children and young people see the links between different aspects of their learning in international education? How do the activities reinforce and extend learning in different parts of the curriculum?

### *Relevance*

- Is international education used to help children and young people see their possible contributions to Scotland and the wider world and to raise their aspirations?



## **Equality and diversity**

- How do we use international education to recognise and address discrimination and promote equality and fairness?
- How do we explore ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic diversity?
- How many children and young people are involved in international education? What can we do to ensure all children and young people, including those at risk of missing out, are involved?

## **Leading learning**

- To what extent do our vision, values and aims include a clear focus on international education?
- How do senior managers support international education in the school?
- How do staff consider, develop and review international education both within their own curricular areas, and in collaboration with others across the school?
- How are the results of self-evaluation, including by children and young people, used to improve international education?





## Appendix 2: examples of *Curriculum for Excellence* Experiences and Outcomes with an international dimension

### Expressive arts

#### **Art and design, early, first, second and third level**

I can respond to the work of artists and designers by discussing my thoughts and feelings. I can give and accept constructive comment on my own and others' work.

(EXA 0-07a / EXA 1-07a / EXA 2-07a / EXA 3-07a)

#### **Dance, third level**

I have created and taken part in dance from a range of styles and cultures.

(EXA 3-08a)

#### **Drama, early level**

I use drama to explore real and imaginary situations, helping me to understand my world.

(EXA 0-14a)

#### **Music, fourth level**

I can give assured, expressive and imaginative performances of vocal and/or instrumental music from a wide range of styles and cultures, using performance directions, musical notation, and/or playing by ear.

(EXA 4-16a)

### Health and wellbeing

#### **Food and the consumer, second level**

Through exploration and discussion, I can understand that food practices and preferences are influenced by factors such as food sources, finance, culture and religion.

(HWB 2-34a)

#### **Social wellbeing, early, first, second, third and fourth level**

As I explore the rights to which I and others are entitled, I am able to exercise these rights appropriately and accept the responsibilities that go with them. I show respect for the rights of others.

(HWB 0-09a / HWB 1-09a / HWB 2-09a / HWB 3-09a / HWB 4-09a)

#### **Physical activity and sport, fourth level**

I can explain the role of sport in cultural heritage and have explored the opportunities available for me to participate in school sport and sporting events.

(HWB 4-26a)



## Languages

### **Classical languages, third and fourth levels**

I have investigated the culture of the Greeks or Romans through literature and language.  
(CLAN 3-04a/ CLAN 4-04a)

### **Gaelic (learners), second level**

I can share some simple facts about life in some of the countries where Gaelic and related languages are spoken.  
(LGL 2-09a)

### **Literacy and English/Literacy and Gàidhlig, all areas and levels**

I develop and extend my literacy skills when I have opportunities to develop my understanding of what is special, vibrant and valuable about my own and other cultures and their languages.  
(introductory statements)

### **Modern languages**

#### **Reading, fourth level**

I can demonstrate my understanding of different cultures and my appreciation of different ways of looking at the world in countries where the language I am learning is spoken.  
(MLAN 4-09a)

## Mathematics

### **Mathematics – its impact on the world, past, present and future, second level**

I have worked with others to explore, and present our findings on, how mathematics impacts on the world and the important part it has played in advances and inventions.  
(MTH 2-12a)

## Religious and moral education/Religious education in Roman Catholic schools

### **Christianity, fourth level**

I am able to reflect upon my own responses to the challenges and opportunities presented by religious and cultural diversity and extend this reflection from the Scottish to the global context. (RME 4-03b)

### **Beliefs, third level**

I can describe how a sense of the sacred affects the everyday living of people with various faiths. I can also describe how my understanding of this has influenced my respect for the faith of others.  
(RERC 3-25a)



## Sciences

### **Biodiversity and interdependence, third level**

I have collaborated on investigations into the process of photosynthesis and I can demonstrate my understanding of why plants are vital to sustaining life on Earth. (SCN 3-02a)

### **Vibrations and waves, fourth level**

By carrying out a comparison of the properties of parts of the electromagnetic spectrum beyond the visible, I can explain the use of radiation and discuss how this has impacted upon society and our quality of life.

(SCN 4-11b)

### **Earth's materials, second level**

Having explored the substances that make up Earth's surface, I can compare some of their characteristics and uses.

(SCN 2-17a)

## Social studies

### **People in society, economy and business, second level**

Through exploring ethical trading, I can understand how people's basic needs are the same around the world, discussing why some societies are more able to meet these needs than others.

(SOC 2-20a)

### **People, past events and societies, third level**

I can explain the similarities and differences between the lifestyles, values and attitudes of people in the past by comparing Scotland with a society in Europe or elsewhere.

(SOC 3-04a)

### **People, place and environment, third level**

I can compare the social and economic differences between more and less economically-developed countries and can discuss the possibilities for reducing these differences.

(SOC 3-11a)

## Technologies

### **All areas and levels**

Learning in the technologies enables me to broaden my understanding of the role that information and communications technology (ICT) has in Scotland and in the global community. (introductory statements)



### Appendix 3: acknowledgements

This publication draws on inspections and a series of visits to gather examples of good practice carried out during the period 2008-09. HMIE should like to thank all children, young people, parents, carers and staff from the following establishments and services where the good practice highlighted in this guide was observed.

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Bathgate Academy	West Lothian Council
Buckie High School	Moray Council
Cauldeen Primary School	Highland Council
Clyde Valley High School	North Lanarkshire Council
Dalmarnock Primary School	Glasgow City Council
Children and Families Department	Edinburgh City Council
Fortrose Academy	Highland Council
Glendelvine Primary School	Perth and Kinross Council
John Paul Academy	Glasgow City Council
Juniper Green Primary	Edinburgh City Council
Knox Academy	East Lothian Council
Perth High School	Perth and Kinross Council
Portlethen Academy	Aberdeenshire Council
Shawlands Academy	Glasgow City Council
St David's High School	Midlothian Council
St Ninian's High School	East Dunbartonshire Council
St John's Primary School	Edinburgh City Council
St Thomas Primary School	Moray Council
St Timothy's Primary School	Glasgow City Council
Whiteness Primary School	Shetland Islands Council
Woodacre Nursery School	Glasgow City Council
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### **Appendix 3: key bodies, links and resources**

#### **Scottish Government International Framework**

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2008/04/23150847/1>

#### **Scottish Government agenda for international education**

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Education/Schools/Excellence/IE>

#### **Learning and Teaching Scotland**

##### **Education in Scotland - thinking globally**

<http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/internationaleducation/index.asp>

#### **The Global Dimension in the Curriculum (2007 edition)**

[http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/Images/Participation\\_tcm4-416871.pdf](http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/Images/Participation_tcm4-416871.pdf)

#### **The British Council**

<http://www.britishcouncil.org/scotland/>

#### **eTwinning**

<http://www.britishcouncil.org/etwinning.htm>

#### ***Curriculum for Excellence***

<http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/curriculumforexcellence/index.asp>

#### **Building the Curriculum 3: A Framework for Learning and Teaching**

<http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/curriculumforexcellence/buildingthecurriculum/guidance/btc3/index.asp>

#### **Building the Curriculum 4: Skills for learning, life and work**

<http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/curriculumforexcellence/buildingthecurriculum/guidance/btc4/index.asp>

#### ***Curriculum for Excellence Experiences and Outcomes***

<http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/curriculumforexcellence/experiencesandoutcomes/index.asp>

#### **Count Us In: A sense of belonging: Meeting the needs of children and young people newly arrived in Scotland (HMIE, September 2009)**

<http://www.hmie.gov.uk/documents/publication/cuimnns.pdf>

#### **International activity in Scotland's Colleges**

<http://www.hmie.gov.uk/documents/publication/iasc.html>

#### **International comparisons of college staffing**

<http://www.hmie.gov.uk/documents/publication/icocs.html>

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The following documents provided earlier national advice on international education. Much of their content is still relevant today.

**An International Outlook: Educating Young Scots about the World (2001)**

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/158299/0042867.pdf>

**Think Global, Act Local (2003)**

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/47074/0023902.pdf>

**How good is our school?: international education (2003)**

<http://www.hmie.gov.uk/documents/publication/HMIEInternationalEducation.pdf>



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Further information is available from:

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