The Global Dimension in Initial Teacher Education

Reviewed by Orla Devine

The Global Dimension in Initial Teacher Education is a guide produced by St. Mary's University College, Belfast, to celebrate and share the work undertaken by students, staff and the College's local and international partners in the course of delivering their Global Dimension in Education project, which was funded by the Department for International Development (DfID). The guide aims to share the College's learning and experience in embedding the Global Dimension throughout their university with other providers of Initial Teacher Education (ITE).

The introductory section provides the reader with a brief outline of the aims of the project, which were, in effect, to support student teachers in effectively incorporating the Global Dimension into their practice and delivery of the school's curriculum. The introduction also provides some background information on how the project was funded, coordinated and managed by the university with support at all levels being an important ingredient. Section two outlines the multi-faceted approach taken by the college in project delivery including: Cross Subject Approach; Student Conferences; Whole College Approach; Resource Library; Certification and On-line Course; International Opportunities; Masters Course; Professional Studies; and Research Activities.

The last part of section two describes the research undertaken and outlines the methods used, including focus groups, questionnaires and a longitudinal study which surveyed the views of a cohort of ITE students from first to third year. A baseline was established so that the information could be compared and measured at the end of the third year. These research methods were used to measure 'levels of knowledge about the global dimension in education, opinions about its content, and opinions about the most appropriate ways it can form part of the curriculum in Northern Ireland' (St. Mary's University College, 2008:25). Research was carried out in both primary and post-primary schools as well as the College itself.

Section three of the guide provides the reader with three tried and tested development education activities, which were used with the student teachers during the Global Dimension conferences to explore key issues including global inequality and interdependence. Educators in the development non-governmental and youth sectors will find these ideas and activities useful and easy to implement.

Section four provides the reader with six student case studies, which present an overview of a range of practical global dimension projects carried out by students during teaching practice. Each project had a different focus,

and detailed the learning experiences of the pupils involved. These case studies not only provide both teachers and student teachers with ideas for lessons and action projects but also demonstrate to the reader how the global dimension is applicable to all learning areas and can lead to better connected learning experiences. They also demonstrate the usefulness of resources produced by NGOs and other organisations for exploring global dimension issues. Primary and post-primary teachers and school management personnel will all benefit from reading these case studies as they provide ideas for global dimension projects that could be implemented within their own schools.

The fifth section of the guide describes the internal and external factors that contributed to the success of the project, as well as the lessons learned along the way. The recommendations provided will particularly benefit other ITE institutions as they identify the key factors to be taken into consideration when embarking on a Global Dimension project.

Finally, the appendices provide the reader with a breakdown of the rationale for the Global Dimension in Education project and the eight key concepts that underlie the idea of the global dimension in the curriculum. It also outlines the relationship between these concepts and the key themes of the revised Northern Ireland (NI) curriculum. A breakdown of the various subject areas at Key Stages 1-4 and links to the global dimension are also provided, as well as useful resources for teaching the global dimension at Key Stage. It directs teachers where to find the latest NI curriculum information (http://www.nicurriculum.org.uk) and refers them to the new Global Dimension in Schools website (http://www.globaldimensioninschools. org), which maps the global dimension concepts to the NI curriculum key elements and provides links to relevant resources for each learning area.

The guide is clearly laid out, succinct and makes good use of images throughout such as world maps and graphs. I would recommend the guide to other ITE institutions for insight into embedding the global dimension into their institution using a multifaceted approach. Schools will also find the publication useful particularly for senior management and those involved in teaching and co-ordinating local and global citizenship. The guide provides schools and teachers with ideas on how the global dimension can contribute to meeting the requirements of the revised curriculum, as well as innovative global dimension lessons. Newly qualified teachers will also find the guide useful in suggesting resources and lessons can bring a global dimension into the classroom.

The Global Dimension in Initial Teacher Education guide can be downloaded from the St. Mary's University College website at: http://www. stmarys-belfast.ac.uk/academic/education/gde/default.asp or for a free hard copy contact Damian Knipe at St. Mary's University College, 191 Falls

Road, Belfast BT12 6FE, Tel.: +44 (0)28 90268257.

St. Mary's University College (2008) *The Global Dimension in Initial Teacher Education*, compiled by Shannon, R, Murray, S & McCann, G, Belfast.

Orla Devine is Humanitarian Educator at the British Red Cross in Belfast where she develops and delivers training in humanitarian education to teachers through the Red Cross Continuing Professional Development and Initial Teacher Education project.