



CITIZENSHIP AND VALUES EDUCATION TO THE RESCUE!

Making the case for a Call to Action

FULL REPORT
NINTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Education for Values and Citizenship in
England, Ireland, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales
David Kerr, NFER and Conference Rapporteur

**GORDON COOK
FOUNDATION**

Institute for
Global Ethics 
UK Trust

"The [Five Nations] conferences have fulfilled a genuine need in the development of citizenship education... They have brought educators together when there were no other opportunities for them to meet and discuss the many-faceted problems that confront them. Each year a hundred educators have been able to live together for a few days in comfortable surroundings and learn from each other, exchange information and materials and plan together how to coordinate their efforts in the field. Together they have been able to consolidate their thinking about this complex subject, to refine their theoretical and practical knowledge and to reach a deeper understanding of its philosophical implications. It has been remarkable how much the participants have in common, despite the great variety of the systems they work in and the multiplicity of their problems."

*Pioneering Moral Education, Victor Cook and his Foundation
W. A. Gatherer
pub. Edinburgh University Press Ltd., 2004.*



Photos in this report are a selection from past conferences

Photos on pages 7, 8, 17 and 23 by Pete Pattison

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Contents

	FOREWORD	4
	DR WILLIAM A GATHERER: AN APPRECIATION	5
1	INTRODUCTION	6
2	BACKGROUND CONTEXT	8
3	WHERE HAVE WE COME FROM?	10
4	WHERE ARE WE AT NOW?	14
5	WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?	18
6	HOW DO WE GET THERE?	20
7	ISSUING A CALL TO ACTION	23

Foreword

This Report of the Ninth Annual Conference forms part of a suite of three documents entitled **Citizenship and Values Education to the Rescue**¹ published by the Institute for Global Ethics UK Trust on behalf of the **Five Nations Network** (i.e. from **England, Ireland, Northern Ireland, Scotland** and **Wales**), and supported by the Gordon Cook Foundation. The full suite comprises:

- (i) Executive Summary
- (ii) Report of the Ninth Annual Conference
- (iii) A Call to Action

The simultaneous launch of these publications in each of the five countries denotes a significant milestone in this unique series of annual conferences on **Education for Values and Citizenship** and a pivotal point in the evolution of the Five Nations Network. Together, they encompass a retrospective of the nine conferences since 2000, a full report of the outcomes of the 2008 conference held in Glasgow last November, and a Call to Action 2009, looking to the future and emphasising the vital importance of values and citizenship education for the network itself and a much wider group of stakeholders.

Poignantly, this landmark also coincides with the passing of Dr William A. Gatherer, the leading champion of these Five Nations conferences, whose brainchild the original project was. It is therefore fitting that this trio of documents is dedicated to Bill, as he was known to all, and a tribute by Ivor Sutherland, a fellow trustee of the Gordon Cook Foundation, follows. As the convenor of the conferences since 2000, I myself worked with Bill and country colleagues on planning each of the annual events. I can therefore vouch at first hand for how deeply he cherished the collegiality and mutual respect this work engendered over successive years, and how much he valued the inspiration and challenge of sharing practice across the five countries, leading him to describe the Five Nations conferences as “one of the most successful ventures the Foundation had ever undertaken, as it achieved a general affirmation that values education, in its widest sense, lies at the heart of education for citizenship”.²

Sheila Bloom

*Chief Executive, Institute for Global Ethics UK Trust
September 2009*



¹ Further copies can be obtained from the Institute for Global Ethics UK Trust
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For further information, visit Five Nations page within IGE UK Trust website: www.globalethics.org.uk

² Pioneering Moral Education, Victor Cook and his Foundation by W.A Gatherer, pub. Edinburgh University Press Ltd., 2004

Dr William A. Gatherer: An appreciation

Bill Gatherer, a distinguished schools inspector and education advisor, was raised in Huntley and educated at The Gordon Schools and Aberdeen University, where he studied English.

In the course of his lengthy professional career, he served as a teacher of English, a lecturer in English in Jordanhill College of Education in Glasgow, a member of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Schools and finally Chief Education Adviser for Lothian Regional Council, in which post he had responsibility for the provision of the entire range of advisory services to all of Lothian schools.

His career describes a constant upward trajectory, as you would expect of a man blessed with such a formidable intellect, such a strong personality, such enormous drive and such huge enthusiasm for all that he did.

He had the knack of bringing people, especially young people, out of their shells, getting them to focus on the key issues, getting them to tease out the pros and cons and moving them in a gentle but firm way towards the goal he had in mind. Bill was a skilled and accomplished teacher, both in didactic terms and in the educative sense.

Bill wore many hats. He was the consummate professional, he was an academic and scholar of repute, an avid reader, a clever wordsmith, he published widely, he was in great demand as a public speaker, he loved the cut and thrust of debate and he was very interested in, and supportive of, educational research.

In that latter connection he was a stalwart member of the Scottish Educational Research Association which used to hold its annual conference in St Andrews. Bill was always in the thick of things, sometimes taking part in a panel discussion, sometimes doing the after-dinner speech (when he could of course be very funny, especially if he switched into the Doric tongue) and, on one occasion at least, he gave the key-note address.



In his retirement Bill devoted his still boundless energy largely to the activities of the Gordon Cook Foundation. He was a founding member of its Trust, which is dedicated to the promotion of values and citizenship education. In some ways Bill was the Gordon Cook Foundation. He knew exactly what had been in the founder's mind, he knew every detail of the foundation's objectives and he knew the history of the organisation inside out. Above all, however, he was committed with a fierce passion to the foundation's work. At trustees' meetings, Bill could be forceful and even argumentative and perhaps, on occasion, a tad cantankerous but he always knew precisely what he was doing. He was seeking to ensure that the agenda was not hijacked, that the focus of discussion was not lost and that the most appropriate decisions were made.

Ivor Sutherland

The Times Educational Supplement Scotland
Friday April 3, 2009
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1 Introduction

This is a report on the outcomes of the Ninth Annual Conference on *Education for Values and Citizenship in England, Ireland, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales*, held in Glasgow, in November 2008. The conference was organised by the Institute for Global Ethics UK Trust and sponsored by the Gordon Cook Foundation. The conference brought together practitioners, policy-makers, teacher educators, inspectors, stakeholders and NGO representatives from across the **'Five Nations'** (i.e. from **England, Ireland, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales**), with unique, in-depth and up-to-date expertise in education for values and citizenship.

The overarching aim of the conference was to take stock of where education for values and citizenship has come from, where it is currently and where it should go and, in the light of dialogue and debate, to set the agenda by agreeing what needs to be done to move this area forward across the Five Nations. Having taken stock, participants concluded that the time was right to further strengthen and embed education for values and citizenship across the Five Nations. The changing contexts within which citizenship and values education are framed and practised in society, education and schools and by young people are creating *'windows of opportunity'* for moving the area forward. Participants argued that there are particular *windows of opportunity*:

- *In society* – the challenges posed by the lack of trust and public confidence in politics and politicians, the impact of the global economic downturn and the rapid movement of people within and across communities make even stronger the case for promoting citizenship and values education, as a positive antidote to such challenges.
- *In education* – the drive to educate young people for life in the 21st century, the move to more flexible curriculum and learning frameworks, and emphasis on more competence- and skills-based learning all strengthen the opportunities for citizenship and values education to get a firmer foothold in the curriculum and at whole-school and wider community levels;
- *In schools* – the increasing encouragement to school leaders and teachers to use their professional judgment in shaping curriculum and learning experiences that fit the needs of their learners and

school and local contexts create opportunities for citizenship and values education to be integral to how schools are organised, the values they promote and the learning experiences they encourage;

- *Among young people* – the increasing concern of young people about the society in which they are growing up, frustration at not having a voice on issues that matter to them, and boredom with traditional teaching and learning, create the opportunity to underline the relevance of citizenship and values education – through its aims, active processes and outcomes – to the lives and concerns of young people.

Taken together, these *'windows of opportunity'* provide the catalyst for action within and across the Five Nations. It is vital that citizenship and values education is seen as central to addressing the current challenges in society, education, schools and for young people – that, as the title of the conference report states, it can *'Come to the Rescue!'*. However, participants believed that for this to happen, the Five Nations Network needs to do more to grasp the initiative and set the agenda for citizenship and values education, rather than just responding, piecemeal, to developments. The conference ended with a rallying cry for the Five Nations Network to issue a collective Call to Action, to galvanise support and build capacity for education for values and citizenship. The case for issuing a Call to Action was all too clear.

The conference and its outcomes underline the expertise within the Five Nations Network and its potency as a unique forum for 'inter-nation' dialogue and decisive, collective action.



Five Nations Network Strategy Group planning for the future

1.1 REPORT STRUCTURE

The report is divided into six sections. These reflect the overarching aim, underlying themes and working practices of the conference. The sections present a natural progression from review and reflection to the drawing up of collective recommendations for action. However, it should be noted that a written report can neither do justice to the quality and diversity of the contributors and participants who attended, nor fully capture the dynamism and breadth of the exchanges in Glasgow. Rather, this report is a précis – an attempt to draw out and make sense of the multifarious strands discussed during the conference. The six sections are:

- *Background Context* – the context to the conference, issues and topics discussed and working practices;
- *Where Have We Come From?* – progress within and across the Five Nations in relation to citizenship and values education and the changing contexts for dialogue and debate;
- *Where Are We At Now?* – taking stock on the three ‘Big Questions’³ as a lead into broader reflection on successes and challenges for citizenship and values education in the Five Nations;
- *Where Do We Go From Here?* – agreeing on the need for collective action, appraising the opportunities and affirming a shared vision of the way forward for citizenship and values education;
- *How Do We Get There?* – setting the agenda for citizenship and values education within and across the Five Nations by setting out clear ‘lines of action’ focused on capacity building, consolidation, embedding, innovation and belief;
- *Issuing a Call to Action* – moving forward together through a collective Call to Action from the Five Nations Network that seeks to galvanise support for citizenship and values education.

Though the report captures a moment in time, the conference outcomes – in the Call to Action – are focused on securing the future of citizenship and values education in the Five Nations and will be relevant long after the memories of the conference have faded.

³ The three ‘Big Questions’ were: handling controversial issues; the role of values in education and support for teachers through IIT and CPD; and youth involvement and pedagogy.

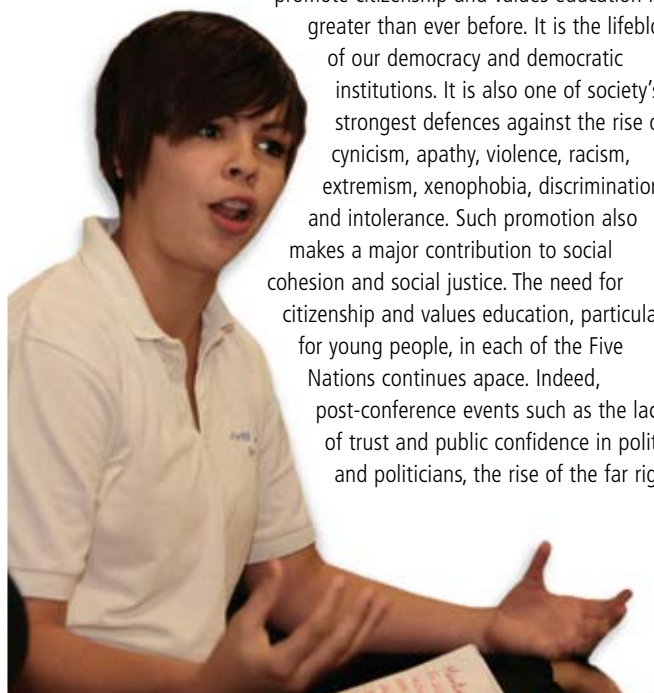


2 Background context

Participants in the Five Nations Network have developed a shared aspiration that every young person in England, Ireland, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales has a right, as well as an entitlement, to high quality citizenship and values education.

They believe passionately in this aspiration because of its impact on young people and society. For high quality citizenship and values education helps to promote and strengthen the values of democracy, citizenship, human rights and good governance. It educates people, particularly young people, to play an active and responsible part in democratic life and exercise their rights and responsibilities in society. It prepares them with the knowledge, understanding, skills, attitudes and values needed to work together on issues, make decisions and take action. They engage with issues and challenges in their everyday lives and develop the confidence and conviction to voice concerns and to take action at all levels of society.

In our complex, challenging and changing world, the need to promote citizenship and values education is greater than ever before. It is the lifeblood of our democracy and democratic institutions. It is also one of society's strongest defences against the rise of cynicism, apathy, violence, racism, extremism, xenophobia, discrimination and intolerance. Such promotion also makes a major contribution to social cohesion and social justice. The need for citizenship and values education, particularly for young people, in each of the Five Nations continues apace. Indeed, post-conference events such as the lack of trust and public confidence in politics and politicians, the rise of the far right



parties in the European elections and continued global economic crisis further strengthen the need for effective citizenship and values education in our society.

Despite divergences in philosophy, intent and approach, there is considerable richness of experience in each of the countries. They also face common challenges and concerns in their education systems and have common goals of citizenship and values education for young people which can be shared, as shown by the success of the Five Nations Network and annual conferences since 2000. The aims and working methods of this, the ninth conference, arose explicitly from such common challenges and concerns.

2.1 CONFERENCE AIMS

The 2008 conference was the ninth annual Education for Values and Citizenship conference organised by the Institute for Global Ethics UK Trust and sponsored by the Gordon Cook Foundation. The conference had dual aims. The first aim was to take forward and further reflect collectively on the outcomes of the eighth annual conference (Leeds, 2007) framed around the three 'Big Questions': controversial issues, values and youth involvement. The second, and more ambitious, aim was to take stock of where citizenship and values education had come from in the Five Nations, where it had got to and what actions should be taken to move it forward collectively. This reflection was to take place against the backdrop of the previous eight annual conferences and be guided by current contexts and aspirations for the future. The six specific aims of the 2008 conference in Glasgow were to:

- Reflect on and take forward the outcomes of the eighth annual conference in 2007, *'Beyond the Comfort Zone'*;
- Consider the three 'Big Questions' – *controversial issues, values and youth involvement* – in relation to citizenship and values education;
- Explore and share strategies to improve approaches to the three 'Big Questions';
- Take stock of where education for values and citizenship has come from, and where it is going to, within and across the Five Nations;

- Discuss and debate the successes, challenges and opportunities facing education for values and citizenship in a rapidly changing and global society;
- Take stock of current developments and set out clear 'lines of action' that need to be taken in order for education for values and citizenship to move forward across the Five Nations.

The conference was planned around a shared agenda agreed by the Five Nations Network and articulated by the Strategy Group. The intention was to focus on issues of collective challenge and concern across the Five Nations, rather than one country taking the lead in planning, as in previous years. It was felt that by working together the Five Nations Network could have greater success in paving the way for further collaboration and shared actions. It was also felt that the time was right for the Five Nations to consider taking action. This explains why the explicit aspiration of the 2008 conference was collectively to arrive at a Call to Action as one of the conference outcomes. The Call to Action was to use the conference conclusions on successes, challenges and opportunities for citizenship and values education within each country and across the Five Nations to formulate a strategic plan for taking the area forward. The 2008 conference and its working practices were deliberately set up with this outcome in mind.

2.2 CONFERENCE WORKING PRACTICES

The 2008 conference was planned around interactive workshops, small group discussions and feedback sessions in order to maximise opportunities for review, reflection and looking forward. The conference began with discussion of the three 'Big Questions', using the World Café⁴ technique. It then broke into mixed country groups followed by home country groups in order to take stock, discuss ways forward and set out ideas for a shared communiqué. So as to be interactive and to encourage maximum participation, the conference was held under the Chatham House Rule. The rule means that participants are free to use the information and views received during the conference, but no individual contributor or participant should be quoted (or their identity or affiliation revealed) without their express permission. The rule applies equally to this report.



⁴ www.theworldcafe.com

3 Where have we come from?

The first part of the conference reflected on where citizenship and values education has come from in the Five Nations, as well as how the Five Nations Network and conferences have evolved from 2000 to 2008. This reflection was set within the changing contexts of citizenship and values education in society, in education and in the Five Nations. Such reflection encouraged participants to consider anew, and move beyond, their individual country experiences. It also acted as a catalyst in crystallising the belief that the Five Nations Network should take action to strengthen and further embed education for values and citizenship.

3.1 PROGRESS IN THE FIVE NATIONS CONFERENCES

This was the ninth Five Nations conference to be held, the first being in London in 2000. Participants reflected that, almost a decade on, the rationale and need for the Five Nations Network and conferences were stronger than ever. A comment from the report on the 2002 conference still rang true:

'There are common issues and challenges across the UK and Ireland [in relation to citizenship and values education], but equally within each country there are unique issues.'

They also concluded that, though the aims and purposes of the annual conferences and Five Nations Network remained familiar, there were considerable differences in the emphasis and ways of working between 2000 and 2008. In short, the Five Nations conferences had evolved and matured in line with developments in

citizenship and values education within and across countries. In particular, there was now:

- Less showcasing of policy and practice from individual countries;
- Greater emphasis on recognising difference while seeking common purpose;
- A more collective and collaborative approach across the Five Nations;
- Increased collective will to look forward, take the initiative and move the agenda for citizenship and values education forward.

Indeed, the 2008 conference aims and outcomes were vivid confirmation of the power and maturity of the combined Five Nations Network's knowledge and expertise, as a platform for collective collaboration and action.

3.2 CHANGING CONTEXTS FOR CITIZENSHIP AND VALUES EDUCATION

Participants also agreed that the contexts within which citizenship and values education were debated, discussed and developed had undergone considerable change between 2000 and 2008. It was important to recognise these changing contexts and to understand their influence on framing the discussion of both current issues and recommendations for future action.

3.2.1 CONTEXT WITHIN AND ACROSS FIVE NATIONS IS DIFFERENT

Participants, particularly those who had attended a number of annual conferences, reflected on how the context for citizenship and values education within and across the Five Nations was substantially different in 2008 from that in 2000. In the first few years of the Five Nations conferences, the emphasis had been on the formation of policy and building capacity to transform policy into effective practices in each country. The countries of the Five Nations – England, Ireland, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales – were all striking out on their own policy paths and asserting the utility and uniqueness of their own approaches and practices. The conferences were about individual countries showcasing their philosophy and approaches and other countries learning from their experiences.





However, over the past few years, policy and practice concerning citizenship and values education have begun to embed and take root. This has made countries more secure in their own developments and lessened the need to highlight differences between countries. Instead, it has increased the desire for countries to share and reflect on common issues, challenges and concerns. In particular, as policies have evolved into practice and understanding has deepened, so individual countries have begun to focus on issues of capacity building, embedding and sustainability. This has rekindled the desire among the Five Nations Network to learn from each other and, in the process, highlighted the commonality of the current challenges and concerns they face in this area.

3.2.2 CONTEXT IN SOCIETY IS DIFFERENT

Participants also acknowledged changes in the broader societal backdrop over the last decade and their impact on the status of citizenship and values education. This broader societal change has seen citizenship education move rapidly up the policy agenda for national governments and supranational organisations such as the Council of Europe (CoE) and European Commission (EC). This has been in response to a number of drivers. They include:

- Concern about weakening political and civic engagement in society or disengagement, particularly among the young;
- Increased movement of peoples within and across countries and the pressures on community cohesion and intercultural relations;
- The enlargement of supra-national entities such as the European Union (EU);
- The impact of global events, particularly 9/11 and the London, Madrid and Mumbai attacks, and concerns about combating terrorism and extremism;
- Issues around the management and future of the planet concerning global citizenship, the environment and the world economy.

Post-conference, the world economic crisis, the lack of trust and public confidence in politics and politicians and the rise of far right parties in the European elections, have added further impetus to citizenship and values education.

The result has been considerable focus on developing effective policies and practices for citizenship and values education in the 21st century at national, European and international level. Central to this emphasis has been an explicit move, through education policy, to introduce children and young people from an early age to the habits and practices of

citizenship, through the promotion of citizenship education in schools.

Each of the countries in the Five Nations has been both influenced by, and part of, this broader process. The result is that:

- In **England**, Citizenship was introduced as a new statutory subject in schools in 2002;
- In **Ireland**, Civic Social and Political Education is statutory during junior cycle in schools;
- In **Northern Ireland**, Local and Global Citizenship has been a new statutory subject in schools since 2007;
- In **Scotland**, Values and Citizenship is one of the five National Priorities in Education;
- In **Wales**, Citizenship is part of the statutory provision for Personal and Social Education (PSE) and Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship (ESDGC).

This push for citizenship through education has taken place within a broader policy emphasis in the five countries on the promotion of civil renewal, with the goal of shared identity through strengthened communities. There is considerable activity in the Five Nations countries to maximise the contribution of citizenship education to civil renewal and community cohesion.

3.2.3 CONTEXT IN EDUCATION HAS CHANGED

The changing societal context has been matched by considerable on-going change in education. Back in 2000, citizenship and values education in each of the Five Nations was discussed in relation to monolithic national curriculum structures. Citizenship and values education, as an area, often struggled to find space, acceptance and status in such structures. There was also limited opportunity for schools and teachers to use their professional judgment and autonomy to innovate and experiment. By 2008, that scenario had begun to change under the catalyst of the drive in all countries to consider how best to prepare children and young people for life in the

21st century.

During the conference participants underlined some of the main shifts that were changing the discussion about education, and citizenship and values education per se, within and across the Five Nations. These shifts included:

- More flexible curricula that establish common frameworks which can be adapted to suit national and local contexts;
- Curriculum learning frameworks that are organised around learning areas rather than rigid subject boundaries;
- Competence-based frameworks that set out learner progression in a lifelong learning perspective;
- Framing of learning that takes place in a variety of contexts both in and outside the classroom, and in and beyond school;
- A move away from knowledge acquisition to skills-led learning;
- Designation of teachers as facilitators of learning;
- A move to personalising learning for learners and greater use of continuous, formative assessment practices (Assessment FOR learning (AfL) rather than assessment OF learning);
- Encouragement of greater use of information and communications technologies (ICT) in teaching and learning both in and beyond the classroom, and a broadening of the ways to learn.

Though these changes were still on-going and their implications not fully worked through, participants argued for the need to frame the conference discussion and outcomes concerning citizenship and values education within the changing education landscape. This was vital to ensure the immediacy of any Call to Action.



3.2.4 CITIZENSHIP AND VALUES EDUCATION HAS CHANGED

There was also recognition among participants that the changing contexts in society and education had altered how citizenship and values education was framed and approached in and beyond the Five Nations. Five main shifts were identified that have taken place since 2000, namely:

- *A changing conception of citizenship* – citizenship has moved from a narrow conception of being about status (belonging, nationality etc) to a broader one of also being about active practice and participation – not only having citizenship status but being an informed and active citizen. The following figure encapsulates this shift.

CHANGING CONCEPTION OF CITIZENSHIP

Existing

- Narrow
- Status as a subject
- Being
- Passive practice
- Civic education
- Government
- Representative democracy
- Civic society

Renewed

- Broader
- Active citizen
- Doing
- Active practices
- Citizenship education
- Governance
- Participative democracy
- Civil society

(Kerr, 2009)

- *A more prominent statement of the values and aims underlying citizenship and values education* – this shift was now more noticeable in policy statements from governments and government agencies, in the new and revised national curriculum and learning frameworks in countries, as well as in the mission statements of educational institutions and NGOs. Much greater attempts were being made to ensure that these values and aims were visible and that they underpinned policies and practices for citizenship and values education.
- *A broadening of the aims and objectives of citizenship and values education* – the aim of citizenship and values education is no longer just about encouraging formal political participation in civic society, but also now about preparation for informal participation in civil society; acquisition of a greater understanding and appreciation of issues of identity and belonging, community cohesion, diversity and inclusion in society; and development of a sense of citizenship in a global context, particularly around issues of sustainable development, the environment and stewardship of the planet. This shift has been driven by the need to prepare people, particularly children and young people, to live with confidence in an increasingly diverse, complex, fast changing society.

- A move to a more active, process-driven approach to citizenship and values education – this approach places a premium on active learning and the promotion of meaningful opportunities for participation, particularly through student engagement and voice. This move was encapsulated in the CPD Handbook *Making Sense of Citizenship* (Huddleston and Kerr, 2006)⁵ which stated that:

‘Citizenship education emphasises approaches to learning and teaching based on real-life, everyday experience and active involvement.’

‘Active learning is important to citizenship education because being a citizen is essentially a practical activity – it is something we do.’

This explains the current emphasis at European and country level on setting out the competences required to be an active, participative citizen. These civic or citizenship competences incorporate not only the more traditional *cognitive* dimensions (knowledge and understanding) but also the *affective* (attitudes, values and dispositions) and *active* (skills and behaviours) dimensions.

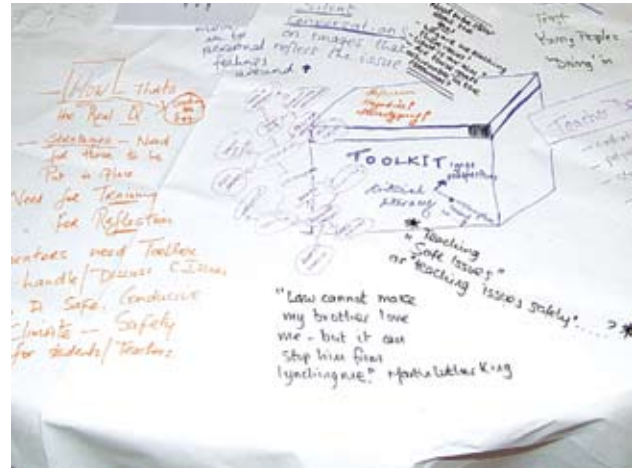
- A growing interest in effective practices and the evaluation and measurement of outcomes – as citizenship and values education has evolved from policy intentions into actual practices, so there has been a desire, within and across countries, to ascertain what is working well and why and to share it more widely. There has also been an interest in mapping the outcomes and impact of citizenship and values education.

3.2.5 FIVE NATIONS NETWORK HAS EVOLVED

Participants also recognised that the Five Nations Network had itself evolved. The largely one-way exchange of policies and practices led by individual countries, that marked the first years had, with hindsight, helped to lay solid foundations for the Network. It had:

- Underlined the power of sharing and networking;
- Strengthened understanding of the complex and diverse histories and distinctive education systems of each country;
- Helped to forge a common bond for Network activities.

This shared history and understanding has enabled the Network to celebrate the richness and diversity of experience but also to focus on commonalities in vision, approach and challenges for citizenship and values education. This focus has emboldened the collective voice of the Network and given it the confidence to want to be bolder in its actions. The Five Nations Network has grown with time into a unique and dynamic forum whose members challenge and learn from each other. Passive exchange and discussion has given way to a desire to work together and to lead, rather than respond to, the agenda for citizenship and values education. The focus, planning for and shared outcomes of this ninth annual conference are testimony to the growing confidence and potency of the Five Nations Network in citizenship and values education. The Five Nations Network is a unique forum for ‘inter-nation’ dialogue and action.



3.3 CONCLUSIONS

Reflecting on their own contexts and experiences, participants recognised that these general shifts were having a considerable impact on policies and practices for citizenship and values education within and across the Five Nations and beyond. These shifts were especially evident in the aims, values and objectives of the new and revised curriculum frameworks and in the processes being promoted in relation to teaching and learning, assessment, monitoring and evaluation. Participants came away realising that despite considerable differences in culture, history and approach to citizenship and values education in each of the Five Nations – England, Ireland, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales – the broad context driving current developments was similar and with it came similar challenges and concerns. This commonality provided participants with a strong foundation upon which to reflect anew on where citizenship and values education had got to in the Five Nations.

⁵ Huddleston, T and Kerr, D. (Eds) (2006). *Making Sense of Citizenship: A Continuing Professional Development Handbook*. Hodder Murray, London.

4 Where are we at now?

Participants then moved on to consider the current state of citizenship and values education across the Five Nations. This was achieved in two steps. The first step was a more focused review of the outcomes from the three 'Big Questions' – *controversial issues*, *values* and *youth involvement* – discussed at the 2007 conference in Leeds and how they could be taken forward. It was intended that this would get participants into the habit of reflection, review, dialogue and debate and warm them up in preparation for the second step. The second step was a broader reflection and review of successes, current strengths and challenges in citizenship and values education in the Five Nations, as a vehicle for identifying opportunities and priorities and setting the agenda for this area for the future.

4.1 TAKING STOCK

The overarching aim of the conference was to take stock of existing policies and practices in citizenship and values education and to assess the particular contribution of the Five Nations in this area. The theme of 'taking stock' was a common starting-point through the conference. Participants used this theme to engage in reflection and review as a catalyst to dialogue, debate and suggested action.

This involved: reflecting on existing successes, strengths and challenges to values and citizenship in the Five Nations and elsewhere, including constraints to policy, practice and action; identifying new and future challenges; and summing up the cumulative impact of these challenges on policies and practices. Conference participants used this summary to draw conclusions about the current state of citizenship and values education across the Five Nations. The outcomes of this process, in relation first to the three 'Big Questions' and then more broadly about citizenship and values education, are examined in turn in the sections that follow.

4.2 THE THREE 'BIG QUESTIONS'

The opening part of taking stock was focused on the three 'Big Questions' arising from the 2007 conference. These 'Big Questions' concerned *handling controversial issues*, *the role of values in education and support for teachers through ITT and CPD* and *youth involvement and pedagogy*. These questions were considered using a World Café approach. This involved conversation on issues using round table discussion facilitated by a table host (For more about Café conversations visit www.theworldcafe.com).

4.2.1 HANDLING CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

The dialogue and debate centred on how young people can engage in meaningful discussion about the issues of the day, how or whether such issues should be raised and the conditions or mechanisms needed to encourage such engagement. The main conclusions from the conversations were that:

How can young people engage with such issues?

- Young people are not used to such engagement;
- Handling controversial issues is a vital part of citizenship and values education and helps to challenge attitudes and assumptions;
- Such engagement requires a different approach or tack and can be a springboard to other things.



How or whether issues can be raised

- Controversial issues should not be shied away from;
- The angle of approach is critical and needs to be adjusted depending on the age and stage of development of young people.

Conditions and mechanisms

- Creating a space or time of safety and security is paramount in successful engagement;
- Teachers and young people need appropriate training in order to make the most of such opportunities;
- Building in time for reflection and review is also critical to successful outcomes.

4.2.2 THE ROLE OF VALUES IN EDUCATION AND SUPPORT FOR TEACHERS THROUGH ITT AND CPD

The dialogue examined three main issues: *does the role of values in education remain hopelessly unclear? whose values? and what is needed to bring about a step change in classroom practice and teacher preparation and training?* The main conclusions reached were:

Values in education unclear

- There is a need to keep up with ever-changing values in society at international, national, local and school level in order to remain real and relevant;
- Schools are perceived as filling a moral vacuum in society and therefore need to make the values that underpin their everyday communication and practice explicit and apply them consistently.

Whose values?

- It is hard to disentangle values in modern society as many are seemingly in conflict;
- Beware of the danger of becoming trapped in a values time warp in the values of your age and/or generation rather than those of younger generations and young people.

What is needed for a step change?

- Improve teacher education and develop effective tools to build teacher confidence in tackling values in education;
- Promote a systematic change in approach and methodology that starts from the notion of the 'whole child' assisted by a range of supports in and beyond school – what one participant termed the 'team around the child approach';
- Model democratic ways of learning and participating that demonstrate explicitly how values inform and underpin effective practice.

4.2.3 YOUTH INVOLVEMENT AND PEDAGOGY

Discussion and debate was centred around two questions: does the involvement of young people in education around values and citizenship lead to tokenism or engagement with only the empowered minority: and what opportunities, strategies and methodologies can be developed to get to the hard-to-reach learner? The main conclusions reached were:

Tokenism or empowered minority

- Be sure to open up citizenship and values education to all young people, not just the empowered and hard-to-reach;
- Guard against formal participative structures such as school and youth councils strengthening tokenism, and make real efforts to involve the hard-to-reach in such structures in order to improve their legitimacy.

Opportunities, strategies and methodologies

- Take advantage of changing cultures in education institutions, particularly schools, with the increased promotion of initiatives such as pupil voice and emotional intelligence;
- Make greater use of real-life contexts and examples that relate to young people's everyday citizenship and values experiences;
- Give young people real and meaningful opportunities and responsibilities;
- Be more imaginative in tapping into the richness of the opinions of young people and their suggestions for change and improvement.

The refocus on the three 'Big Questions' from the 2007 conference served its purpose well. It succeeded in getting participants into the swing of taking stock through conversation, dialogue and debate. It also encouraged them to work together and to learn from the richness of each other's experiences. Interestingly, participants quickly moved from sharing experience to examining successes, strengths and challenges in current approaches within and across the Five Nations. This move, in turn, led them to identify opportunities for common shared action. In a short space of time, they came up with a series of practical recommendations for moving forward on the three 'Big Questions'. It was precisely this process it was hoped that participants would replicate when considering the broader successes and challenges of current approaches to citizenship and values education across the Five Nations and beyond.

4.3 CURRENT SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

Participants moved from focused conversations on the three 'Big Questions' to a wider consideration of the successes of current approaches to citizenship and values education in the Five Nations and the challenges facing this area. They brought their combined experiences and learning from the approaches of others, together with their reflection on changing contexts for citizenship and values education, to bear on this task. This enabled participants, while taking into account the diverse histories and distinct education systems and curricula of the Five Nations, to identify collective successes, strengths and common challenges for citizenship and values education.

4.3.1 SUCCESSES AND CURRENT STRENGTHS

Overall, there was recognition among participants that citizenship and values education had come a long way in the space of ten years in the Five Nations. It had been an exciting and breathless journey for many. A decade ago citizenship and values education was largely an aspiration and plans were only just being considered and drawn up in each of the countries. Since then, and in rapid succession, those plans have come to fruition across the five countries and created a real and visible edifice for citizenship and values education with actual policies, evolving practices and growing support networks, such as the Five Nations. This rapid growth was a success story in itself but also a double-edged sword, for with it came not only significant strengths but also considerable challenges. Participants welcomed the opportunity provided by the conference to catch breath and take stock of where citizenship and values education had come from, was currently at and where it should go in the future.

A number of common successes and strengths were identified, including:

- Top-down policy implementation of citizenship and values education across the 3 to 19 age range including in-depth specific policies for curriculum, whole-school and beyond school provision;
- Strengthening and wider acceptance of pupil voice and participation leading to more opportunities for local autonomy, initiative and action;
- Increased training for school leaders, senior managers, teachers (both new and existing) and young people concerning citizenship and values education;
- Spread of inspection, monitoring and evaluation systems, including self-evaluation, to support the development of effective policies and practices;
- Evolution of effective practices in citizenship and values education across the 3 to 19 age range;
- Growing evidence base emerging based on information provided through inspection, assessment, evaluation and research.

Participants emphasised the importance of recognising and celebrating these successes and strengths. They were achievements to value and take pride in. However, it was also important not to rest on one's laurels.

4.3.2 EXISTING AND NEW CHALLENGES

While much progress had been made in the past ten years, there was a collective recognition that citizenship and values education was still a new area in education and schools. It was putting down roots, but those roots were still fragile. It was, therefore, important to build on these successes and strengths but also to tackle the considerable challenges that still lay ahead if citizenship and values education was to become a more embedded and accepted area in education and schools, as well as in wider society.

The collective challenges that participants identified were often associated with the successes and strengths. This is primarily because conference participants were concerned to embed and sustain those successes and strengths. Interestingly, participants identified a larger number of common challenges than successes and strengths. The main common challenges identified across the Five Nations were those concerning:

- *Political change* – the potential change in education policy with a new or incoming government and the threat that citizenship and values education might no longer be seen as a priority area in education, schools and society;
- *Constant change in education policy and practice* – the need to respond to a constant stream of initiatives and directives. This was both challenging and tiring;



- *Definition and aims* – it was not easy to explain to people, including young people, what citizenship and values education was about. It encompassed complex concepts and its aims and objectives were broad ranging. Some participants noted that although key elements of citizenship and values education were statutory there remained a lack of awareness of what they were and how they should be approached;
- *Leadership and advocates* – though everyone in society had a role to play in citizenship and values education it was not easy to get leaders and advocates, such as politicians, head teachers and senior managers, to actively support and promote the area;
- *Status and credibility* – citizenship and values education was still a relatively new area in education, schools and society and, as such, was fighting for status and recognition alongside more established, traditional areas such as languages, mathematics and science, and newer ones such as ICT. Without status and credibility there was a danger that the area could become marginalised;
- *Standards agenda* – the tension between the rigidity of the 'standards agenda', with its emphasis on national testing and accountability, and the potential for innovation and local action associated with active citizenship approaches. To what extent should citizenship and values education play the game of the current standards agenda or promote more independent and autonomous active citizenship practices?
- *Teacher education* – the scale and cost of preparing new teachers and up-skilling existing teachers to teach it effectively. The emphasis on active approaches and discussion and debate on topical and controversial issues made teacher education vital for quality and standards in citizenship and values education;
- *Uneven and variable practice* – because citizenship and values education was a new area, it was recognised that evolving practices were uneven across the Five Nations. The challenge was to raise the levels of overall practice and to better share and disseminate effective practices where they existed;
- *Sustainability and embedding* – the initial policy push for citizenship and values education had led to rapid, evolving structures and practices. The challenge now was to sustain and embed policies and practices to ensure that citizenship and values education became a recognised part of policies and practices at national, local, school and societal level;
- *Focus and direction* – making the most of the challenges and opportunities created by the changing contexts within which citizenship education is conceived and developed in society, education and schools without losing sight of what is at the core of citizenship and values education.



4.4 CONCLUSIONS

The collective review and reflections on where are we at with citizenship and values education in the Five Nations proved productive and insightful at two levels. First, it created a common frame that enabled conference participants to reaffirm that: citizenship and values education remains vital in promoting and protecting the core, fundamental, common values which underpin all societies and their education systems in the Five Nations and beyond; these values are crucial in helping address the global challenges we face in the first decade of the new century and beyond; and it is essential that young people have opportunities to learn about, experience and practice these values in their everyday lives, particularly in school. Given this, participants agreed that urgent, collective action was needed in the Five Nations to build on current successes and strengths and further embed and sustain citizenship and values education in education, schools and society.

Second, the dialogue and review enabled participants to come up with a practical and focused set of challenges centred on maintaining momentum and ensuring that the area remained relevant and cutting edge. These challenges led them to consider, based on their shared knowledge and expertise, what form that urgent and sustained action should take and where we go from here.

5 Where do we go from here?

The conference, while recognising that this was a difficult and complex question given the breadth of contexts and experiences across the Five Nations, was unanimous that there was a need for immediate and concerted action. It was not enough to take stock of the current situation for citizenship and values education in the Five Nations and leave it there. The review had highlighted the collective will of participants to move forward and provided some concrete suggestions for areas and themes that could be progressed.

Participants also believed strongly that the time was right for collective action from the Five Nations Network. The changing contexts within which citizenship and values education was framed, discussed, developed and practised in society, education and schools and by young people were creating unique *windows of opportunity* for moving the area forward. For example, participants argued that there were opportunities:

- *In society* – the challenges posed by the lack of trust and public confidence in politics and politicians, the impact of the global economic downturn and the rapid movement of people within and across communities make the case for promoting citizenship and values education as a positive antidote to such challenges even stronger.
- *In education* – the drive to educate young people for life in the 21st century, the move to more flexible curriculum and learning frameworks and the emphasis on more competence and skills-based learning all strengthen the opportunities for citizenship and values education to get a firmer foothold in the curriculum and at whole-school and wider community levels;
- *In schools* – the increasing encouragement to school leaders and teachers to use their professional judgment in shaping curriculum and learning experiences that fit the needs of their learners and school and local contexts creates opportunities for citizenship and values education to be integral to how schools are organised, the values they promote and the learning experiences they encourage;
- *Among young people* – the increasing concern of young people about the society in which they are growing up, frustration at not having a voice on issues that matter to them, and boredom with traditional teaching and learning create the opportunity to

underline the relevance of citizenship and values education – through its aims, active processes and outcomes – to the lives and concerns of young people.

Taken together, these '*windows of opportunity*' provided the rationale and catalyst for action. It was important that citizenship and values education was seen as part of the solution in addressing the current challenges in society, education, schools and for young people and was built into on-going developments at all levels. However, participants believed that for this to happen, the Five Nations needed to do more proactively to grasp the initiative and set the agenda for citizenship and values education, rather than just responding, piecemeal, to developments.

Setting the agenda was not just leading calls for further finance, training and structures to support this area. It was also, crucially, about agreeing on strategies for winning over hearts and minds to create more advocates and champions for citizenship and values education. It was about having a common vision of where citizenship and values education should go in the Five Nations, allied to a practical strategic plan as to how that vision could be realised.

Participants came up with a number of suggestions for how to take things forward. Viewed as a whole, these provide a common vision: a way of thinking about and framing future action in citizenship and values education. The suggestions are described briefly in the next sections of this report.

5.1 VIEWING CHALLENGES AS OPPORTUNITIES

Participants stressed the importance of not being overwhelmed or daunted by the scale of the challenges facing citizenship and values education in the Five Nations and beyond. Rather, it was necessary to be optimistic, based on experience and the setting of realistic expectations and goals. Everyone could and should start somewhere and build from there. A crucial part of this common vision was to view challenges for citizenship and values education as opportunities for action, rather than as insurmountable obstacles. Though where there are opportunities there are also risks, the risk of doing nothing in citizenship and values education was not an option at this critical juncture.

5.2 HAVING A CLEARER AND MORE REALISTIC VISION

The conference agreed on the importance of having a common vision for citizenship and values education that encourages and inspires people, particularly young people, and helps sustain them through challenging times. However, to accomplish this there was a need to set out a clear and realistic vision for citizenship and values education in society that was founded on real experience and expertise. It was clear from the conference that such experience and expertise was growing quickly within and across the Five Nations Network.

It was vital to build this vision from the realities of people's everyday citizenship and values education experiences and expertise. Approached in this way, the vision has a relevance – a 'real bite' – that can be used to: inspire people; give them hope; build trust; strengthen communities and encourage people to believe that working together they can make a difference. It was felt particularly important that this vision connected with the realities of young people's everyday experiences of citizenship and values education and gave them hope and inspiration now and into the future.

5.3 REAFFIRMING CORE PRINCIPLES

Participants felt it important that the common vision was rooted in the core ideals and principles which guide citizenship and values education. There was, therefore, a need to revisit and reaffirm these core ideals and principles in the light of changing contexts for citizenship and values education. This culture of citizenship and values education must be:

- Sensitive (particularly to the interests of the weak and marginalised)
- Responsive
- Reflective (particularly to issues of equity, equality and justice)
- Based on realities

These realities have certain implications which relate to the vision of, and mindset for, developing effective citizenship and values education. They include the need to recognise that:

- Citizenship and values, and by association education for them, are not neutral but are heavily value-laden. They are based around core ethical questions which are, and will remain, contested in society
- One size or solution does not fit all in this area
- In order to progress and move forward, we all need to 'unlearn our prejudices' and to relearn, and this should be a constant process, involving reflection, review and renewal.

Indeed, this last point went to the nub of the process that underpinned the conference, namely the opportunity for participants to reflect on and review their knowledge, expertise and experiences within and across the Five Nations Network, to pool the outcomes and to suggest renewed ways of taking forward and strengthening citizenship and values education.

5.4 AGREEING THE SCOPE OF APPROACHES AND WAYS OF WORKING

Having agreed on a vision and reaffirmed the core principles underpinning that vision, the conference participants then discussed the approaches and ways of working required to move forward. The result was a series of approaches and ways of working which participants believe should underpin education for citizenship and values education.

There was general agreement among participants that citizenship and values education should be:

- Inclusive – for all people and not just certain groups or communities;
- A process of lifelong learning;
- Present in both formal and non-formal education settings;
- Multi-faceted and multi-level, with multiple points of entry;
- A collaborative partnership between school leaders, teachers, young people, parents, local communities, the media and leaders in civic and political society;
- Based around a combination of local, national, European and international dimensions;
- Centred around the development needs, views and 'real life' experiences of young people;
- Making the most of the potential of new information and communications technologies (ICT) and new learning opportunities;
- Based on action-orientated, activist approaches linked to increasing opportunities for young people to participate and reflect on their learning from such participation;
- Centred around applied learning – learning through doing – that involves a mixture of knowledge, skills and understanding;
- A marathon rather than a sprint;
- Always 'unfinished business' which demanded a lifetime's efforts;
- About 'thinking outside the box' on occasion, taking risks and courting controversy;
- Messy and uncomfortable rather than safe and cosy

5.5 CONCLUSIONS

The agreement on a common vision of where citizenship and values education needs to go in the Five Nations proved a helpful development. Above all, it provided the vision and ideals necessary for moving forward. However, having a vision needs to be matched by action in taking that vision forward. Conference participants used the vision as a backdrop to revisit the successes and challenges in citizenship and values education and consider the opportunities that these presented. They then turned these opportunities into support for issuing a Call to Action to make the vision realisable and achievable.

6 How do we get there?

The common vision for taking things forward in citizenship and values education in the Five Nations led participants to consider ways to proceed. Underpinning the process was a fundamental belief in the power of people working together to engage in dialogue, discuss concerns and find solutions. Participants found the pooling of knowledge, experience and expertise across the Five Nations Network a powerful platform on which to build collaboration and future action in this area. Revisiting the successes and challenges and the opportunities arising, conference participants came up with a number of concrete 'lines of action' for ways to proceed. These are outlined briefly in the sections that follow. When seen together they form the basis for a Call to Action from the Five Nations Network in order to strengthen, embed and build capacity for education for values and citizenship within and across the Five Nations.

6.1 A CALL TO ACTION – SETTING THE AGENDA

The practical lines of action arose from considering the opportunities from the successes, strengths and challenges facing citizenship and values education in the Five Nations. Participants agreed that these suggestions provided a Call to Action for what the Five Nations needed to focus on in order to consolidate, build on strengths, meet the challenges head on and progress. These lines of action were:

1. Achieving greater policy engagement at all levels – engage with policies not only in connection with citizenship and values education but also with wider policies concerning society, the education system and school reforms.

2. Strengthening policy implementation and support structures – secure increased and on-going funding for support structures and networks and for associated resources that make such structures and resources more sustainable.

3. Securing more leaders and advocates – build more support for citizenship and values education at all levels of society among politicians, policy-makers, school leaders, teachers, parents and young people who have the vision, energy and drive to lead developments in this area.

4. Improving quality and standards – raise the bar and make policy and practice in citizenship and values education more consistent at all levels.

5. Securing more effective training – ensure an entitlement, particularly for new and existing teachers as well as for young people and school leaders, to consistent and on-going training that makes them more secure in the active and participative approaches associated with citizenship and values education.

6. Building a more secure and useable evidence base – build a broad evidence base for citizenship and values education that highlights its outcomes and impact and strengthens the case for it to be an integral part of policy and practice in society, education and schools.

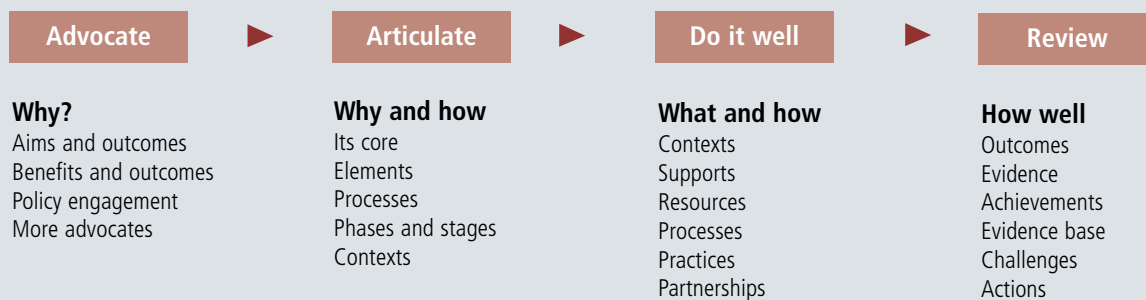
7. Taking more time to celebrate successes and achievements – do more to promote and highlight effective practices and to celebrate successes, particularly those involving young people. This will help to raise awareness of citizenship and values education and to improve understanding of its aims, processes and outcomes.

6.2 MAKING THE CALL TO ACTION REAL

Participants also came up with a plan for citizenship and values education to help make those lines of actions realisable through the issuing of a Call to Action. This plan comprised three components. The first component was a visual representation of the process underpinning 'setting the agenda'. The second component was agreement on the main thrusts necessary to take the Call to Action forward and the third the main components needed to underpin the issuing of a Call to Action. The first two components are addressed in the sections that follow and the third in the short final chapter of this report.

6.2.1 EXPLAINING THE PROCESS BEHIND 'SETTING THE AGENDA'

SETTING THE AGENDA – CALL TO ACTION BUILDING CAPACITY AND EMBEDDING CITIZENSHIP AND VALUES EDUCATION



6.2.2 IDENTIFYING WAYS TO CAPACITY BUILD

Participants were unanimous that the most effective way to move forward was through capacity building. There was a need to be active not just at the local and national level – the 'micro' – but also at two other levels – the 'meso' policy making and 'macro' global and international levels. This necessitates action on all fronts and requires people to be: much more knowledgeable about the workings of the political process and education system (i.e. having better intelligence); more savvy about how they engage with that process and system, and more adept at influencing policy and practice in politics and education. It also involves making the most of the opportunities afforded by old and new media.

Participants identified a range of ways of building capacity based on their own knowledge and experiences in a range of contexts. They included:

- *Securing allies and resources* – we need to broaden the base of policy-making if we are truly to empower and build capacity by ensuring that citizenship and values education and its promotion of participation and governance involves not only politicians but also representatives of civil society;
- *Building networks, partnerships and alliances* – the conference identified a broad range of potential partners and allies and provided many examples of effective networking;
- *Planning projects* – there was a plea from some participants for projects in this area to be more practitioner and young people led. There were also calls for more pilot projects, which are evaluated and the outcomes widely disseminated for the benefit of all;
- *Disseminating outcomes* – all too often there is little or no evaluation and monitoring of processes and outcomes and, therefore, little opportunity to distil the learning outcomes for the benefit of others. There is a need to build a much stronger and more coherent research and evaluation base for citizenship and values education with an emphasis on 'what works';
- *Making greater use of media and ICT* – this area is currently under-utilised, though there were some examples during the conference of the power of new technology to promote greater networking and sharing;
- *Building in formal and non-formal settings* – not just in schools and colleges, but also in workplaces, training providers, community centres, churches and the like.

6.2.3 IDENTIFYING POINTS OF ENTRY

Participants stressed the importance of recognising that there are multiple points of entry for addressing and strengthening citizenship and values education. They include points of entry through:

- Politics (aims and purpose of education)
- Legislation, policy
- Structural change (decentralisation and differentiation)
- Curriculum change (intended, received)
- Resource-led change (textbooks, ICT)
- Pedagogy (school-based, NGO-supported)
- Teacher education (initial, in-service)
- Parent initiatives, community links

It is vital to think multi-dimensionally across these areas and decide on the most appropriate points of entry. While accepting the need to be active across these entry points, participants identified a number of points which were key to effective citizenship and values education. These were the entry points of:

- *Policy makers* – ensuring that citizenship and values education is a long term policy priority at all levels of policy making and that policy formation leads to effective policy implementation and sustainable practices;
- *Schools* – building citizenship and values education into the fabric of how they are organised and the aims and values which underpin daily working practices and relationships;
- *Curriculum* – promoting the notion of national curriculum and learning frameworks underpinned by core aims and values;
- *Teacher education* – realising that teachers are vital to the strengthening of this area and effective practice is founded on initial training and continuous professional development;
- *Local communities* – particularly ensuring that the marginalised and those in non-formal settings are included;
- *Young people* – ensuring that all young people have equitable access to citizenship and values education, not just the empowered minority or ‘hard to reach’.

6.2.4 CONSOLIDATING STRENGTHS AND ADDRESSING WEAKNESSES

Participants also stressed the importance of continuous monitoring, review and evaluation. This process helps to assess how well things are progressing, where strengths lie and, equally importantly, where things are less strong. Participants summarised the process as helping to identify, on the one hand, what we know works, how and why, so that we can share it; and, on the other hand, what we would like to know, but do not at present. The latter can be used as a ‘wish list’ of areas or actions that require attention.

The conference came up with a list of aspects of citizenship and values education where there is still considerable work to be done. These include:

- *Participation* – particularly creating real, sincere opportunities for participation by children and young people in civil and political society;
- *Links between formal and non-formal settings* – especially at the point where formal education ends;
- *Teacher education* – ensuring a continuous entitlement to training and professional development from the point of entry to promotion as a school leader;
- *Training for community leaders* – so that they can better engage with their communities and build stronger links between formal and non-formal settings;
- *Quality indicators* – there is a need for better quality assurance and indicators of minimum requirements or standards;
- *Consultation linked to accountability* – particularly consultation of all practitioners and stakeholders (including young people) in the policy-making process.

6.2.5 INNOVATING AND BELIEVING

Finally, participants stressed the need for the human spirit to shine through and for people to use their knowledge and expertise to continually push the frontiers forward and to believe in their chances of succeeding and making progress in partnership with others. There were many examples of such forward thinking during the conference. Participants also acknowledged the power of having a common vision in which to believe.

6.3 CONCLUSIONS

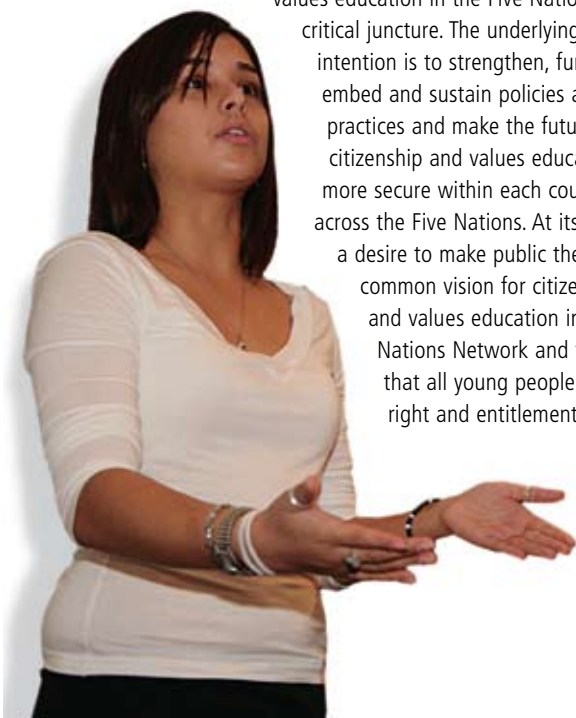
Discussion of ways to proceed in taking the agenda forward elicited a number of practical suggestions of ‘lines of action’ from participants. Taken together, these form the basis of support for the Five Nations to issue a Call to Action. The main purpose of this Call to Action is to seize the moment by rallying support for education for values and citizenship and, thereby, helping to strengthen and further embed this area at all levels in the Five Nations.

However, participants were also clear that the Call to Action needs to be practicable and achievable. Its primary focus should be on building capacity, identifying points of entry and influence and taking forward existing strengths while addressing identified weaknesses. The Call to Action should also be innovative and appealing. The short final chapter to this report captures the collective will of participants, at the end of the conference, to support the issuing of a Call to Action by the Five Nations Network.

7 Issuing a Call to Action

Discussing ways forward spurred participants, in the final act of the Ninth Annual Conference, to seize the opportunity and platform provided by the conference to support the issuing of a Call to Action by the Five Nations. Having reviewed where education for values and citizenship had come from, where it currently was at and where it should go, participants were buoyed by progress made in the Five Nations Network, the wealth of accumulated experience and expertise and the potency of the Five Nations Network and conferences. They argued strongly for these advantages to be turned into concrete action. Though there was insufficient time to go into the precise detail of what that action should entail, conference participants provided a clear steer as to the aims and intentions of such action. It was recommended that this steer should be taken forward by the Strategy Group and translated into a realisable call to, and plan of, action.

Participants were clear that the aim of the Call to Action should be to raise awareness of, and galvanise support for, citizenship and values education in the Five Nations at this critical juncture. The underlying intention is to strengthen, further embed and sustain policies and practices and make the future of citizenship and values education more secure within each country and across the Five Nations. At its heart is a desire to make public the common vision for citizenship and values education in the Five Nations Network and to ensure that all young people get their right and entitlement to high



quality citizenship and values education. Participants expressed a desire that the Call to Action should set out clearly and unequivocally the common vision for what citizenship and values education is, why it is needed, who is involved in it and what its outcomes are. It should also be accompanied by a strategic plan for how the Five Nations Network will build capacity and strengthen citizenship and values education in the short and medium term.

FINAL COMMENT

The conference participants hoped that the Call to Action on citizenship and values education and the strategic plan would come to fruition and lead to concrete and lasting actions.

The 2008 Five Nations Conference has shown the way. It has underlined the power of practitioners and policy-makers from the Five Nations Network, through their combined knowledge and expertise, to build real capacity and set the agenda for citizenship and values education. The platform that has been created needs to be built upon. As participants were reminded by the Rapporteur at the end of the conference:

'Citizenship is a journey not a destination'

The conference showed how far citizenship and values education has come in its journey in the Five Nations, in a short space of time. It also underlined the clear vision and sense of purpose in the Five Nations Network about what needs to be done in the next stage of that journey. The Network is united in seizing the moment and issuing a Call to Action. This call is designed to rally support for education for values and citizenship across the Five Nations – England, Ireland, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales – and to help strengthen and further embed this area at all levels. Participants in the Five Nations Network believe that they have made the case for this Call to Action. They request your active support and participation in making it real and lasting – for the benefit of society, schools and education, but, most of all, for the benefit of young people so that they get their entitlement to high quality citizenship and values education.

Teachers, educationalists, policy makers, curriculum planners, members of the inspectorate, representatives of NGOs and young people from across the UK and Ireland have been meeting together every year since 2000 in a unique forum known as the **'Five Nations Network'**.

Convened by the Institute for Global Ethics UK Trust (IGE UK) with support from the Gordon Cook Foundation, annual conferences have taken place in **London (2000), Glasgow (2001), Birmingham (2002), Belfast (2003), Cardiff (2004), Dublin (2005), Edinburgh (2006), Leeds (2007) and Glasgow (2008)**. The **2009** conference is being held in **Derry/Londonderry**.

This **Report** is one of three publications¹ documenting the evolution of the conference series and looking to the future, culminating in a shared **Call to Action**. This call is designed to rally support for education for values and citizenship across the Five Nations – **England, Ireland, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales** – and to help strengthen and further embed this area at all levels.

Participants in the Five Nations Network believe that they have made the case for this Call to Action. They request your active support and participation in making it real and lasting – for the benefit of society, schools and education, but, most of all, for the benefit of young people so that they get their entitlement to high quality citizenship and values education.

¹ Executive Summary, Full Report, Call to Action

