

Global education

School/centre: Our Lady's High School, Motherwell

Age range: S2

Education for Citizenship contexts: cross curricular, community links, curricular areas

Global education and promoting a positive school ethos

The Kamwokya (pronounced 'Kamoja') Partnership Project, is an interesting example of a whole-school approach to development education. It was developed at Our Lady's High School in Motherwell in association with SCIAF (Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund) during the 2000-2001 session. Although relatively new, the project is grounded in an established fund-raising association with SCIAF. It also reflects the wish of the school's RE department and its chaplaincy team to broaden school involvement in development education issues. The project supports the aims of both the school and the chaplaincy to promote a positive ethos and develop links with the wider community.

The Kamwokya Partnership Project

Kamwokya is a Ugandan shanty town community. It is described as a breeding ground for diseases such as malaria, cholera and typhoid, which are frequently fatal. Many of Kamwokya's young people have also been killed by the AIDS epidemic raging through Africa. The Kamwokya Christian Community is an organisation pledged to improving conditions by lobbying politicians to install clean water supplies, provide job training for young people and improve health-care conditions. Our Lady's High School has undertaken to support the Kamwokya community by raising funds and by raising the awareness of young people. In the future it is hoped that more personal links will also be established.

The Kamwokya Project was developed as a cross-curricular initiative, building on and developing the existing work of several departments, as well as bringing departments and pupils together for a number of whole-school activities. Mr Tom Krawczyk, Principal Teacher of Geography, acted as school coordinator of the project and to support what the school calls 'joined-up planning'. The project was launched with the aid of SCIAF personnel and resources at a school in-service day. This was supported by further awareness raising and promotion, including information leaflets, inclusion in the school website and development of a Kamwokya room with relevant displays and artefacts. African development themes were added to fair trade issues within the school's Lenten Charities programme to assist in pupils' awareness raising.

Developing the Kamwokya project within the curriculum

Departments were asked to identify existing work relevant to the project or opportunities for small-scale development that might support it, and a curricular matrix of subjects and year groups was drawn up. In the first year of the project this identified contributions from 11 departments, as well as further departments keen to contribute in subsequent years. Activities span the entire secondary age range from S1 to S6 and current contributions extend beyond RME and geography and include:

- mask making and other activities exploring African art in the art department.
- the study of the pathology of selected diseases experienced in East Africa in the biology department.
- the study of food production and the use of fertilisers and pesticides in chemistry.

Education for Citizenship in Scotland case study

- the development of functional letter writing in order to support school contacts with young people in Africa in English.
- making educational toys to send to Kamwokya in home economics.
- work on the politics of aid and the politics of food in S4 and S5 modern studies.

In addition to work within specific subjects, a need was also identified for a large-scale focus activity in order to raise young people's awareness of the interconnectedness of their subject activities. A creative and performing artist and tutor, Mr Amu Logotse, was identified for the school by SCIAF to facilitate this. He was invited by the school to work with a number of pupil groups and some staff from May 2001. He initiated pupil activities on African drama and storytelling, food, society, art, music, movement and dance, returning to the school on a number of occasions to assist with the progress of activities arising from his first visit. The outcome of this work was an evening event, 'Out of Africa', held at the end of June 2001, when pupils' work was displayed, performed and demonstrated. Most of the pupils involved in the event were from S1 and S2 and their presentations were the culmination of two months' work in a number of departments. Amongst the evening's activities:

- a physical education group performed African dances.
- modern studies pupils took part in a fair trade game.
- home economics pupils cooked and presented an African buffet for guests.
- pupils in the music department performed 'Sounds of Africa'.
- two English department groups performed role plays on the theme of exploitation, using their own scripts.
- sand painting and other African-influenced art from the Art Department were on display.

The evening was supported by the school board and PTA and was well attended by parents and a large number of invited guests.

Future plans

The Kamwokya Partnership Project figures in the school's development plan each year, with planned development and extension of subject-based curricular activities. Other plans include the extension of the project to local primary schools. Two members of the school's staff formed part of a joint SCIAF-North Lanarkshire study group who visited Kamwokya in June 2002 to help consolidate and extend the activities that had taken place. In 2004/5 at the end of a four year period the school is re-launching the project to further involve S1-2 pupils and maintain the project's momentum.

Web address

<http://www.ourladyshighschool.co.uk/id76.htm>

Contact details

(1) Tom Krawczyk tel: 01698 265191

Email: tom.krawczyk@ourladyshigh.n-lanark.sch.uk

(2) Liam Mulrooney tel: 01698 265191

Email: liam.mulrooney@ourladyshigh@n-lanark.sch.uk