

RED ROSE SCHOOL SUSTAINABILITY POLICY

Updated: November 2019

Sec2 Chapter

1

SUSTAINABILITY MIX



INTRODUCTION TO THE SUSTAINABILITY MIX FRAMEWORK

We identify the guiding principles which give direction to teaching and learning for sustainability. It indicates the place of values and attitudes in our school and identifies broad themes which can be used throughout the curriculum at appropriate ages to improve understanding of the guiding principles. Skills development is a crucial element since the methodology we favour is a cyclical inquiry model of reflection, choice, and action. The end products are active world citizens ready to embrace their responsibility for building a world committed to the principles of sustainability. All these elements are inter-related and should not be viewed in isolation from each other. The framework thus serves as a guide for teachers to help plan activities in the promotion of sustainable development.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Interdependence
- Citizenship
- Stewardship for future generations
- Diversity
- Quality of Life
- Eradication of poverty
- Fairness (Equity and Justice)
- Change
- Uncertainty, precaution and recovery
- Being healthy
- Staying safe
- Enjoying and achieving
- Making a positive contribution
- Economic well-being

VALUES AND ATTITUDES

Human values are internalised sets of belief or principles of behaviour held by individuals or groups. The values which follow are chosen because they are deemed to be universally acceptable and desirable, based on what is best described as “international humanism” and are embodied in such Charters as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Rights of the Child, the Rio Declaration of the UN conference on the Environment and Development. Consistent with such values are attitudes which should be nurtured in the learning process and which themselves strongly influence the process, quality and outcomes of both learning and assessment. In keeping with the general philosophy of Education for Sustainability (ESD), it is not expected that the values listed should be delivered dogmatically; rather pupils should be encouraged to examine the context and implications of their own values and those of others to arrive at a set of values which best create a climate of sustainability. Likewise, the attitudes we wish to see developed begin with the individual and then, through reflection, are examined at group level, in the community, at national and ultimately on a global scale. Two vital components in this process of acquisition are the role of community service and the willingness to take action. We wish to see our pupils develop self-reliance and confidence in their actions and above all, the belief that these universal values transcend local and national concerns.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Basic rights include the rights to health, safety, nutrition, shelter, safe water and access to necessary resources and social structures that take care of and support all elements of the ecosystem. In addition, all should be able to enjoy, and achieve making a positive contribution leading to economic well-being.

PEACE, COOPERATION AND SOLIDARITY

Inequality is a potential source of conflict and can be addressed through peaceful means, cooperation, empowerment, and solidarity.

RESPECT FOR AND PRESERVATION OF DIVERSITY

Recognize the forms of diversity which may include, but are not limited to, biological, cultural, spiritual and gender-related.

ADAPTABILITY TO CHANGE

Ecosystems and social systems are dynamic in the short, medium, and long term. Individuals need the capacity to have the confidence to adapt and react in a peaceful and sustainable manner.

REASONABLE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALL

In keeping with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, people have the right to choose and define a reasonable quality of life which takes into account basic principles of sustainability.

SKILLS

It is expected that pupils will develop the skills [as well as attitudes] necessary to be proactive and effective proponents of sustainability. These can be summarised under the headings of Thinking Skills, Communication Skills, Personal Skills, and Action Skills. Those especially significant for ESD are the following:

THINKING SKILLS

CRITICAL THINKING

The ability to distinguish fact, opinion and belief; to recognise bias and prejudice; to identify issues and problems as well as the assumptions in an argument; to reason correctly; to identify cause and effect relationships and distinguish between possible and probable futures; to distinguish between wants and needs; to develop the ability to put to the test ethical codes, beliefs systems, political structures and cultural values in light of the guiding principles of sustainability.

INFORMATION HANDLING

To be able to observe and form a hypothesis and test it; to know where to look for answers and how to select and reject information; to effectively analyze and evaluate evidence; to hypothesise eventual outcomes and consequences in order to be able to choose the most appropriate action.

CREATIVE THINKING

To seek novel solutions and answers; to think laterally and approach problems from multiple perspectives; consider the future direction of society and the environment, and the role of the individual in contributing to the future.

REFLECTION

To stand back from a problem and identify its component parts; to effectively monitor thought processes and produce appropriate strategies for dealing with any particular problem; to define quality of life in the light of sustainability.

DIALECTICAL THINKING

Thinking about more than one point of view; understanding multiple points of view; being able to construct an argument from different points of view based on knowledge of the other; to evaluate whose interests particular points of view represent.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

PRESENTATION

To be able to clearly and coherently explain ideas.

ACTIVE LISTENING

To listen carefully, understand and acknowledge the views of others.

NEGOTIATION

To recognise the complexities of compromise as a tool in negotiation; to carry on a productive dialogue towards the resolution of disputes.

PERSONAL SKILLS

CO-OPERATION

To work effectively with others towards sustainability; work towards negotiated consensus and cooperative resolution of conflict, to work towards inclusion rather than exclusion.

ADAPTABILITY

Willing to change opinions in the light of evidence and reason; engage change effectively at individual and social levels.

SELF-DISCIPLINE

Ability to conduct one's self appropriately and manage time effectively.

RESPONSIBILITY

Take on and complete tasks in an appropriate manner; being willing to assume a share of the responsibility.

THE LEARNING THEMES

The intention of outlining suggested learning themes is to provide teachers with ideas for exploring some key issues in ESD. It is expected that all themes will be explored at appropriate times in the child's development and should reflect the principle of "think globally, act locally". Teachers will be able to identify points of connection between these themes and the content prescribed in their own subject areas. While some subject areas lend themselves more than others, all have a responsibility to contribute.

LEARNING THEMES:

1. Health (Food & Drink)
2. Natural Laws (Energy & Water)
3. Human population and carrying capacity (Traffic & Travel)
4. Conservation, Material Cycles (Pollution, Waste, Recycling)
5. Global Citizen, Democracy, Trade, Debt
6. Role of democratic participation