Embedding Global Citizenship Education at Second-level: A Principal’s Guide

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Contributors

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Purpose of guide

To assist principals and school leaders to embed Global Citizenship Education in second-level schools

What is Global Citizenship Education?

Global Citizenship Education (GCE) is an educational process aimed at increasing awareness and understanding of the rapidly changing, interdependent and unequal world in which we live. By challenging stereotypes and encouraging independent thinking, GCE helps students critically explore the root causes of global justice issues and how they interlink with our everyday lives.

GCE inspires global solidarity by supporting people to fully realise their rights, responsibilities and potential as global citizens in order to take meaningful action for a just and sustainable world.

How is Global Citizenship Education connected to learning at Junior & Senior Cycle?

Junior Cycle Statements of Learning linked to GCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Junior Cycle Statements of Learning (SOL)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>STATEMENT OF LEARNING:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>SOL 5 has an awareness of personal values and an understanding of the process of moral decision making</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOL 6 appreciates and respects how diverse values, beliefs and traditions have contributed to the communities and culture in which she/he lives</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOL 7 values what it means to be an active citizen, with rights and responsibilities in local and wider contexts</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOL 8 values local, national and international heritage, understands the importance of the relationship between past and current events and the forces that drive change</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOL 9 understands the origins and impacts of social, economic, and environmental aspects of the world around her/him</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOL 10 has the awareness, knowledge, skills, values and motivation to live sustainably</td>
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Global Citizenship Education is in line with the vision for senior cycle education with its focus on fostering resourceful, confident, engaged and active learners and values focused on human dignity and respect, equality and inclusion, justice and fairness and freedom and democracy.

What is WorldWise Global Schools?

Irish Aid’s WorldWise Global Schools is Ireland’s national Global Citizenship Education (GCE) programme for post-primary schools. WWGS was set up in 2013 as the key channel through which Irish Aid support for Global Citizenship Education in post-primary schools is to be coordinated. The aim of the programme is to increase the number of post-primary schools engaging in quality global citizenship education by providing a comprehensive range of supports.

[www.worldwiseschools.ie](http://www.worldwiseschools.ie) contains further information about teaching resources, grant applications and the WorldWise Global Schools Passport Award.

Global Citizenship Education Subject Guides WorldWise Global Schools has produced a number of resources to assist teachers to make cross-curricular links to Global Citizenship Education in their subjects. The resources are available from the WorldWise Global Schools website here: [www.worldwiseschools.ie/tools](http://www.worldwiseschools.ie/tools)
Global Citizenship Education & Ethical Education in Educate Together schools

Ethical Education is a subject taught in all Educate Together second-level schools. It is timetabled for one period a week across all year groups with separate curriculums for Junior Cycle, Transition Year and Senior Cycle.

**Ethical Education**

Aim: To create culturally competent, aware and active global citizens

Ethical Education involves:
- Exploring different worldviews, beliefs and values
- Considering ethical dilemmas and issues
- Practicing ethical decision-making

Ethical Education aims to develop students’ abilities to:
- Think critically
- Communicate respectfully
- Act ethically

Ethical Education is central to the Educate Together school model and helps to ensure the principles of equality-based, student-centered, democratically run and co-education are lived out in practice. With its focus on justice, solidarity, equality and sustainability and on taking action, Global Citizenship Education fits naturally within Ethical Education. GCE is featured as a unique strand on the Junior Cycle Ethical Education curriculum and is also a strong feature of the Senior Cycle Ethical Education curriculum.
Embedding Global Citizenship Education

The examples below are ways that principals in the Educate Together network support Global Citizenship Education in their schools.

- Create “GCE moments” in all subjects
- Incorporate GCE in cross-curricular projects and learning
- Include a focus on GCE and Ethical Education in teacher recruitment
- Facilitate and encourage teachers to attend GCE CPD
- Engage with a GCE School Network to support and share learning
- Empower students to engage in GCE

These ideas are discussed in more detail under different themes in the following pages. These themes reflect the stamps (areas) that are addressed as part of the WorldWise Global Schools Passport Award process:

1. Curricular
2. Extra Curricular
3. Teacher Capacity and Engagement
4. Student Capacity and Engagement
5. School Leadership and policies
6. Community engagement

Top tip! “Apply for WorldWise Global Schools funding”

All the principals agreed that applying for this funding was beneficial and helpful. Applying for the WorldWise Global School Passport Award is a very effective way of reviewing the work in Global Citizenship Education already happening across the school. The application asks schools to record the actions being undertaken under a range of different areas. This straight-forward reporting process creates a clear picture of how schools are currently engaging and provides information that can be used to help plan for the future.

You can listen to the principals discuss these practices by accessing the recorded webinars on which this guide is based, available here:

Embedding GCE at second-level starts with the ambition and will to include it across the curriculum and to involve all staff members.

While it is important and helpful to have GCE Champions or lead teachers, it is essential that all staff have an awareness of Global Citizenship Education to ensure that the approach is maintained across subjects and has a wider impact across the school.

**How?**

The principals who participated in the webinars suggested a variety of ways to embed Global Citizenship Education in planning. Core to this advice was the role of the principal in demonstrating the value they place on Global Citizenship Education by keeping GCE on the agenda, supporting GCE events and activities and creating space for GCE learning.

“Global Citizenship Education is a priority when we do our recruitment, it’s a priority in terms of teacher CPD, it’s a priority in terms of school self-evaluation, it’s a priority in terms of visibility within the school, it’s a priority in terms of the approach to lesson design that we promote within the school, it is central to the school.”

Niall, principal Kishoge Community College

1.1) **Global Citizenship Education has space and focus in the curriculum**

“GCE is not something extra to be added in.”

Colm, principal Educate Together Secondary School Wicklow

In Educate Together schools, GCE learning is facilitated partly by the subject of Ethical Education, which all students have once a week but there is also scope in lots of other subjects. WorldWise Global Schools have a series of subject guides that can help to identify where links can be made.

In Hansfield ETSS, some students have included GCE as part of their Classroom Based Assessments for Junior Cycle.
In Galway ETSS, Art teacher Martina encouraged students to express Social Issues and Worldly Concerns through collage art combining learning in Ethical Education, CSPE and SPHE. The collages covered topics including child labour, poverty and justice issues. This helped to embed and deepen students' learning.

Planning at the start of the year and including a section in department work plans and subject schemes of work for GCE can help teachers to build GCE into teaching and learning across different subject areas.

1.2) Creating “GCE moments”- planning at the start of the school year

“We ask all our teachers to look for their Dev Ed moment in their subject. They highlighted the Dev Ed moments in red in their subject department plans and you can really find it everywhere.”

Kathy, principal Bremore Educate Together Secondary School

At the start of the year, all staff are involved in identifying “GCE moments” in their subject curriculums. Completing this as a whole staff early in the year helps to create the awareness of GCE and ensure that teachers are making the links for their students as they progress with the curriculum in their subjects.
To assist with this process, a GCE specialist such as a WWGS Education Officer, can be invited to do an input with all staff or, teachers with previous experience of GCE can lead the process.

In the first year of Bremore ETSS, the principal applied for WorldWise funding to help support GCE. Responsibility for GCE has since been adopted by other members of staff with teachers of Art, Science and Ethical Education leading inductions for all staff and new staff at the start of each school year.

Including GCE as a section on the school’s template for subject plans further supports the inclusion of GCE as standard practice in teaching across all subjects.

1.3) Developing cross-curricular Global Citizenship Education learning and events

Hansfield ETSS, Bremore ETSS, Belmayne ETSS, ETSS Wicklow and Galway ETSS have all used phenomenon based or integrated learning as a way of enhancing learning about Global Citizenship Education in their schools.

Phenomenon based or integrated learning is a student-centered approach to learning where students direct their own learning by selecting a topic or question to explore. This results in a cross-curricular approach to learning which may include information from a number of traditional subject disciplines.

For example, in Galway ETSS students explored the topic of health and the issue of vaccinations, comparing health systems around the world. This linked to a number of Sustainable Development Goals including Goal 3 Good Health and Wellbeing and Goal 10 Reduced Inequalities.
Similarly, in Belmayne ETSS, where a STEAM class was part of the timetable with 1 hour per week, students explored the theme of “Ireland and the future”. Thinking about Ireland in 2050, students questioned the role of technology and examined flooding and waste management around the world, proposing solutions to the issues that face local and global communities. This linked to Goal 6 Clean Water and Sanitation and Goal 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities.

Focusing on one or more of the SDGs can be a great way to anchor a GCE focused cross-curricular learning project.

“Vary the focus on topics- GCE is not just Climate Action, think Water, Hunger, Gender Equality - teachers and students may have particular interests or passions that will help to identify these areas. This helps to ensure that GCE doesn’t become stagnant or have students feel like they’ve “done” GCE.”

Kathy, principal Bremore Educate Together Secondary School
2. Extra Curricular

Global Citizenship Education can also be embedded in the school through extra-curricular activities.

2.1) Supporting Global Citizenship Education in Clubs, Events and Activities

Focusing on GCE themes and issues through the school debating club, for example, can enhance students’ opportunities to learn about important issues and connect their learning in other subjects.

Encouraging and supporting students to organise events around GCE such as a Fairtrade Fortnight showcase, display, breakfast or lunch can support students’ learning in subjects such as Art, Business, Geography, Science, CSPE and Home Economics.

ETSS Wicklow invited schools to participate in a Model UN. Model UN Clubs are encouraged to take action to support the values of the UN and the Sustainable Development Goals.

“We collaborated on a Model United Nations this year which was really focused on bringing that whole issue of global citizenship right up to the front of education, a very practical and brilliant way for the students to engage as well as that, learn other skills like public speaking [...] along with the knowledge they learn on the different topics.”

Colm, principal Educate Together Secondary School Wicklow

2.2) Facilitating School Tours and Trips with a Global Citizenship Education theme

In Bremore ETSS, tours and trips with a GCE theme and link to the Educate Together ethos are prioritized. Students have enjoyed trips to Sonairte as well as special trip to visit the European Council in Strasbourg.
3. Teacher Capacity and Engagement

“GCE CPD is really important, teachers going out gives the message that it’s supported.”

Bernie, Hansfield Educate Together Secondary School

3.1) Supporting and valuing Global Citizenship Education by attributing budget and time for teachers’ attendance at relevant CPD

There are lots of opportunities for teachers to engage in CPD but it’s important for principals to place a priority on GCE in order to support teachers’ skills and knowledge development in this area.

Facilitating teachers to attend CPD with a GCE focus is key to developing the capacity of teachers to lead in this area. It also communicates your own passion and support for this as a school leader and ensures that there is a continued focus on developing learning in this area. Involving different teachers in the CPD provided allows the expertise and responsibility to be spread and encourages critical mass.

It’s very important that not just one or two teachers are involved because this can mean that the learning and support for GCE is lost if that teacher moves on from the school.
3.2) Learning acquired through attendance at Global Citizenship Education CPD is shared with other staff members

Creating opportunities for staff to share their learning following participation in CPD is as important as facilitating the teacher(s) to attend. This helps to disseminate the learning and widen the impact of participation in CPD while ensuring a continued focus on GCE by the wider staff.

Belmayne ETSS use regular TeachMeets as a way of sharing learning among all staff following CPD attendance by a teacher.

3.3) Involving and inviting new teachers

NQT teachers have time and energy and can be great sources of inspiration and new ideas.

3.4) Supporting Teacher Leadership and Global Citizenship Education Champions

While it’s important that all teachers understand their responsibility for embedding GCE in their teaching, it can be helpful to identify a small group of GCE leaders or champions to coordinate and encourage GCE events and activities in the school. They might be responsible for applying for and reporting on WorldWise Global Schools grants, for example. It’s important that time is given to these teachers to collaborate and plan.
4. Student Capacity and Engagement

“It’s important to hand over some responsibility for leadership to students.”

Ashling, principal Belmayne Educate Together Secondary School

4.1) Supporting Student Councils

Student councils that are democratically run support students’ voices and encourage them to take action and be involved in school decision-making processes and events. Student voices are a really important part of GCE.

4.2) Using active learning methodologies in all classes

Active learning involves students as partners and creates shared responsibility for their learning processes. Any GCE CPD that teachers attend will include a focus on active methodologies as this is recognized as an important part of learning in Global Citizenship Education.

4.3) Involving students in assessment and review processes

Students can provide great insight and feedback when they are consulted and asked about their learning.

Surveying students can reveal how successful activities and events are in raising their awareness and the findings can feed into future planning and ensure continuous improvement.

WorldWise Global Schools have a student assessment tool that can be used or adapted for this purpose.

4.4) Encouraging, acknowledging and supporting students to enter competitions independently

Schools regularly get information from various sources about competitions and other events relevant to GCE. This information can be shared with students via assemblies, announcements or a GCE noticeboard.
“We have Friday morning assemblies which is often a good forum for students to speak on GCE so that’s been really useful and it’s a space that’s embedded in the timetable so it’s fifteen minutes on a Friday morning.”

Sarah, principal Galway Educate Together Secondary School

4.5) Involving students in school committees

At Belmayne ETSS, every staff member and student are required to be on at least one committee related to other areas of learning e.g. Amber Flag, Green Flag, Active Flag committee. The committees are facilitated to meet during class time. Teachers are the facilitators with the students taking the lead and running the committees. There was so much interest in the green committee that students decided to create a separate committee specifically for sustainability. The attribution of some class time and the involvement of all staff members helps to communicate to students that learning and involvement in these areas is important and valued.

4.6) Facilitating student-led peer learning

At Kishoge Community College, senior students took over the design and implementation of GCE lessons.

“We asked senior students to take over the design and running of the whole-school GCE project. So, we would have had Transition Years designing a series of lessons for the rest of the school and they would have delivered them over the course of a month. They were central to that.”

Niall, principal Kishoge Community College
5. School Leadership and Policies

“We made it clear from the start in our teacher induction that Global Citizenship Education and Ethical Education has to be embedded in all subjects. We have it in our schemes of work now, it’s part of our board meetings. It’s part of teaching and learning and it’s what we do.”

Ashling, principal Belmayne Educate Together Secondary School

5.1) Linking Global Citizenship Education to the school ethos

Ethos is central to the vision for learning and underlines the approaches and practices in a school. Making a connection between Global Citizenship Education and the ethos of the school ensures that GCE has a natural and important place.

5.2) Creating and signing a Whole School Global Citizenship Education pledge

The commitment to GCE can be further strengthened through the creation and signing of a Global Citizenship Education pledge. This is a great way to involve the whole school community including students, parents, teachers and the Board of Management.

Signing a pledge and establishing Global Citizenship Education as part of the ethos of the school will help to ensure that GCE is prioritized.

5.3) Making Global Citizenship Education a standing agenda item for staff meetings

Make GCE a standing item on the staff meeting agenda. It might be just a quick update that is shared sometimes but it communicates the value and expectation that GCE will be addressed by all teachers.

5.4) Focusing on and asking about Global Citizenship Education as part of teacher recruitment

This communicates the expectation that all teachers are responsible for teaching GCE and that GCE is an important part of the school approach and ethos.
5.5) Involving the Board of Management

Global Citizenship Education events and activities can be brought to the attention of the Board through the Principal’s Report or by adding GCE as a standing agenda item. Board members can also be invited to GCE school events or invited to join GCE school committees.

5.6) Including Global Citizenship Education as part of a post-holder role

Consider making responsibility for GCE part of a post e.g. Assistant Principal 2. Time is required to run and support GCE events and initiatives and this can help to ensure that the space for this is maintained as the school grows.

5.7) Meeting and sharing ideas with other school leaders

Add GCE as an agenda item at Principal Network Meetings to share learning and experience.

WorldWise Global Schools also organise an annual GCE symposium for school management to share information across different schools.

“The best resource we have is each other. There’s any amount of resources on the internet now but it’s how we use those. If principals are setting up, they should reach out and I think all of us would be willing to share at any point.”

Sarah, principal Galway Educate Together Secondary School
6. Community Engagement

6.1) Establishing a Global Citizenship Education committee

In Bremore ETSS the GCE Committee is open to students, parents, teachers- and board members. Among other responsibilities, the GCE committee maintains and updates the GCE displays in the school.

6.2) Promoting Global Citizenship Education through school social media and communications

Celebrate and acknowledge student and teachers’ involvement in projects, competitions, workshops with a GCE theme. This helps to communicate that GCE is valued and central to the school.

6.3) Engaging in joint Global Citizenship Education events and activities

Hansfield ETSS and Kishoge CC have both been hosts to the Educate Together Global Citizenship Education Student Showcase event which brings students and teachers from all second-level Educate Together schools together to demonstrate their learning in GCE. Events like this involve parents and members of the community.

“The showcase events help open up to the whole community, students see it as important when they see other schools involved in it too.”

Bernie, principal Hansfield Educate Together Secondary School

WorldWise Global Schools also host an annual Global Citizenship Education student conference which brings students from schools around the country together to engage in workshops and roundtables.

Events like these show students that other schools are involved in GCE and underline the value and importance of GCE.
Useful websites for further information and resources

http://www.worldwiseschools.ie/


https://developmenteducation.ie/
“It’s exciting to be on a learning journey together about GCE - no-one is an expert, set targets that are achievable in your own school and context. Get ideas from other schools but don’t compare yourself to them, do your own thing - it’s not a competition, it’s a journey.”

Kathy, principal Bremore Educate Together Secondary School