

Enterprise Policy – some starting points:

Enterprise is promoted throughout this school as an integral part of its individualised learning ethos, its active global citizenship and business curriculum, and its role in contributing to its local communities. Enterprise, especially as framed within the business world of social enterprise, helps our students develop into active community members with the skills, values and knowledge needed to create change, locally and globally, and to enter the field of business and work.

Definition

Enterprise is the use of creativity, knowledge and skills to solve open ended problems. The promotion of enterprise requires the creation of spaces in the curriculum, and extended activities, in which students can decide on how they will solve a problem. The problem(s) must be set-up to allow for numerous and imaginative alternative solutions, or more simply it must not have a fixed answer or one directed by the teacher.

1. Individualised Learning.

Enterprise is an important part of individualised learning, allowing self-directed learning, the students defining how they seek their answers. It allows the students to research, plan and act in directions they have chosen. As a process it develops the skills and methods used in self-managed learning. It can be seen as a necessary part of the New Curriculum 'compelling learning experience'.

2. Business Learning.

Enterprise is intimately linked to business and the concept of entrepreneur, the creative and driven minds behind businesses. Students can experience enterprising learning opportunities through business activities, creating, planning, running and evaluating a business. This should not monopolise the school's definition of enterprise. It does allow for the use of business people in the school, as mentors, panellists for 'dragon dens' style events, and as advisers or experts to be interviewed. Business can be seen as the driver of economies, but with controversial issues of power, accountability, history of empire, exploitation of resources and people.

3. Citizenship Learning.

Enterprise, in terms of business, can be used to explore how businesses work, locally and globally, through the framework of social enterprise. This is a tool recognised by the United Nations, in the form of co-ops, as vital in tackling poverty around the world, as well as empowering people as active citizens within a culture of democratic participation. Students can learn to work together to improve their communities using this global tool, social enterprises.

4. Schools of Democracy.

Businesses need Articles of Association, or constitutions, to make them accountable, and for them to be able to act as a corporation. The constitutions of social enterprises and their resulting decision-making processes are seen by the UN as making co-ops schools of democracy for their members. Why are people willing to die for their vote around the world? The workings of democracy can be learnt through using democratic decision-making in social enterprises.

5. Financial Literacy

Enterprise in business activities allows for the development of financial literacy through budgeting, financial planning, costing, working out mark-ups, auditing and presenting plans and audits. Each social enterprise

can apply for a start-up loan from the school-run funding panel/bank/credit union. To do so they need to present a business plan, the panel of students will judge the plan and award a loan or suggest changes needed for a re-application. They will need to give financial reports to show they can pay back the loan as they run the business, and that they are being held accountable for their financial management.

6. Sustainable Schools.

Social enterprise is business defined by a multiple bottom line agenda. A single bottom line is profit. Multiple bottom line includes community and the environment and therefore has sustainability built into its values. By framing business enterprise within social enterprise the school ensures its students are learning about sustainability and how business can help create a sustainable world, locally and globally.

7. Fairtrade Schools.

To become a Fairtrade School you need to have lessons and curriculum content promoting the understanding of Fairtrade, as well as a student/teacher group promoting Fairtrade through a policy statement and action, the staffroom and outlets serving Fairtrade goods and promoting Fairtrade within the wider community. Fairtrade as an example of social enterprise and its importance to development in Southern Countries should be integrated into enterprise activity in the school. Most Fairtrade products rely on producer co-ops of small farmers, and money saved through local credit unions.

8. Healthy Schools.

Healthy eating can be promoted through growing and selling food, promoting an understanding of the science of plants and the economics of 'from the field to the plate'. A healthy food tuckshop can be used to promote healthy lifestyles through enterprise. Active community participation is a part of healthy schools and can be promoted through social enterprises being co-operatives based on group and democratic decision-making.

9. Project work and fund-raising.

Throughout the school, in different years and tutor groups, there will be projects and fund-raising activities and events. These can all contribute to the school's enterprise ethos with small changes that can significantly effect the learning aims. By handing the responsibility of the planning and budgeting to the students you empower them and promote their financial literacy as well as change the language and ideas from charity and fund-raising, to co-operation and business and profit sharing. The students will learn how the poor are fighting poverty through business, instead of dependency on charity.

10. Global Schools.

Social enterprise allows your students to learn about the way poverty is being tackled and democratic participation and human rights are promoted at grassroots levels in poor communities around the world through using this powerful tool. It will address the issue that can stereotype the south, of dependency on charity and fundraising. Issues of human rights, democratic participation, the role of co-ops in local and global economies, Fairtrade, sustainable development, financial accountability and getting rid of fraud, the effect of who owns the supply chain will all help children to understand global development. As part of your school links with schools in the South, social enterprise will allow children and teachers from both schools to support, as co-operative partners, the funding of the link and the economic relationship between the schools.

