Beyond RE: Engaging with Lived Diversity – the role of Intercultural Education in schools

Martha Shaw, Researcher, Faiths and Civil Society Unit, Goldsmiths University of London

INTRODUCTION

This report presents the findings of a consultation commissioned by 3FF on the role of approaches to intercultural education (IE) in equipping young people and their communities to engage with diversities of religion and belief.

3FF have worked for 17 years providing training and educational programmes and activities aimed at promoting intercultural competence - the skills and attitudes needed to live peacefully and happily together in a diverse society. This consultation was undertaken in order to identify the position of 3FF's approach within the wider field of intercultural education. It also draws attention to the opportunities and challenges around IE as a whole school approach, and to the contribution of organizations such as 3FF in achieving this.

3FF is conscious that this work takes place in a wider context of debate about the future of learning about religion and belief, and the aim is to provide a useful and stimulating contribution to ongoing discussions around school RE, SMSC, Citizenship, and approaches to inclusive education and cohesion.

INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

The terms "interfaith" and "intercultural" education are often used interchangeably to refer to the work of a range of organisations working in the UK and internationally on learning about religion and belief as a response to diversity[1]. 3FF has preferred to use the term "intercultural" education in this context, and the consultation reflects this. The rationale for this choice is that it is the more widely recognised term internationally and reflects better the complexity of

---

[1] Other examples of intercultural education programmes in the UK include *Face to Faith* run by the Tony Blair Faith Foundation, the *School Linking Network* and the work of *All Faiths and None* (AFAN).

identity as multiply layered – incorporating culture broadly, as well as faiths specifically. A second reason is that, rather than viewing diversity as an array of different cultures, an intercultural perspective understands culture as dynamic, and interrelational. In this sense, interculturality presupposes multiculturalism and results from 'intercultural' exchange and dialogue (UNESCO 2006:1)

A key aim of IE is to equip students with the skills to engage confidently and positively with diverse belief and cultural identities. This approach seeks to counter prejudice and stereotype, moving participants towards an "emotional and empathic attitude of respect for and humanization of the 'other'".[2] In this sense it has stated and specific social purposes in mind. It is intentional.

Whilst often understood as a response to the needs of our rapidly globalising society, IE finds its basis in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) which stipulates that education "shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace". (UNESCO 2006:22) Thus, IE is often described as *learning to live together*, one of 'the four pillars of education' as identified by the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-First Century (UNESCO 2006;19). Its efficacy is seen to consist "in developing the knowledge, skills and savoir-etre necessary to be able to understand, accept and integrate the diversity of which we are part and the ability to communicate across all borders, be they real, virtual or imagines and/or conceptualized" (Olafsdottir, 2011).

In the European context, IE is closely aligned with human rights education and education for democratic citizenship. Thus, since its foundation in 1949, the Council of Europe has ascribed great importance to IE. Over time it has moved away from a focus on minorities and their integration into European schools, towards an articulation of interculturality as exchange and dialogue between people of different cultural groups. Its 2011 report, *Living Together – Combining Diversity and Freedom in 21st Century Europe* gives pride of place to education and invites Council of Europe states to prepare to develop "intercultural competencies" as a core element of school curricula. (Council of Europe, 2011). Intercultural education is thus gaining increasing attention at the international level.

In response to the 'Rabat Commitment'[3], 2005, UNESCO published *Guidelines on Intercultural Education,* proposing three principles to guide educational policies:

Principle I - Intercultural Education respects the cultural identity of the learner through the provision of culturally appropriate and responsive quality education for all;

---

[2] See Shashoua, http://ghfp.info/Portals/1/contributors/papers/fullpaper_shashoua.pdf

[3] Rabat Commitment (2005), which was the outcome of the Conference on Dialogue among Cultures and Civilizations through Concrete and Sustained Initiatives (Rabat, Morocco, 2005), held in the context of UNESCO's work on the "Dialogue among Civilizations", contains seven recommendations and twenty-one "specific proposals" on the integration of the principles of intercultural dialogue through Intercultural Education into educational settings (UNESCO 2006).

Principle II - Intercultural Education provides every learner with the cultural knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to achieve active and full participation in society;

Principle III - Intercultural Education provides all learners with cultural knowledge, attitudes and skills that enable them to contribute to respect, understanding and solidarity among individuals, ethnic, social, cultural and religious groups and nations. (UNESCO 2006)

The Religion & Belief Dimension of Intercultural Education

Within this, the importance of addressing inter-religious issues through education is well recognized internationally. UNESCO, the Council of Europe and The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe have all stated the importance of more dialogue-based education aimed at promoting tolerance and respect for difference based on religion and belief.[4]

The Council of Europe views the religion and belief dimension as a key, integral part of IE. Following its 2008 White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue, *Living Together As Equals in Dignity*, the Council published a Recommendation in 2008[5] calling on member states to "pursue initiatives in the field of intercultural education relating to the diversity of religions and non-religious convictions in order to promote tolerance and the development of a culture of "living together"(Council of Europe,2008). It recommends that education should develop intercultural competences through:

- developing a tolerant attitude and respect for the right to hold a particular belief, attitudes based on the recognition of the inherent dignity and fundamental freedoms of each human being;
- nurturing a sensitivity to the diversity of religions and non-religious convictions as an element contributing to the richness of Europe;
- ensuring that teaching about the diversity of religions and non-religious convictions is consistent with the aims of education for democratic citizenship, human rights and respect for equal dignity of all individuals;
- promoting communication and dialogue between people from different cultural, religious and non-religious backgrounds;
- promoting civic-mindedness and moderation in expressing one's identity;
- providing opportunity to create spaces for intercultural dialogue in order to prevent religious or cultural divides;

[4] In 2007, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE/ODIHR) published the Toledo Guiding Principles on teaching About Religions and Beliefs in Public Schools. See also UNESCO 2006, Council of Europe 2008.

[5] (Recommendation CM/Rec(2008)12 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the dimension of religions and non-religious convictions within intercultural education. Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 10 December 2008 at the 1044th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)

- promoting knowledge of different aspects (symbols, practices, etc.) of religious diversity;
- addressing the sensitive or controversial issues to which the diversity of religions and non-religious convictions may give rise;
- developing skills of critical evaluation and reflection with regard to understanding the perspectives and ways of life of different religions and non-religious convictions;
- combating prejudice and stereotypes vis-à-vis difference which are barriers to intercultural dialogue, and educating in respect for equal dignity of all individuals;
- fostering an ability to analyse and interpret impartially the many varied items of information relating to the diversity of religions and non-religious convictions, without prejudice to the need to respect pupils' religious or non-religious convictions and without prejudice to the religious education given outside the public education sphere. (Ibid)

The Council of Europe and partner organizations have produced a number of resources aimed at developing the religious diversity dimension of intercultural education, including a reference book for schools outlining concepts and pedagogical approaches (Keast 2008). Robert Jackson's *Signposts - Policy and practice for teaching about religions and non-religious world views in intercultural education (2014)*, provides comprehensive advice to policy makers, schools and teacher trainers on issues around the implementation of the Recommendation.

Intercultural Education, Religion and Belief in the UK

Schools in the UK have a duty to promote good relations between people of different religions and beliefs[6] and to promote community cohesion[7]. Requirements for provision in support of students' 'spiritual, moral, social & cultural development' (known as 'SMSC') includes the development of respect and understanding of cultural diversity. Yet the idea of intercultural competency is not developed. Likewise, the concept of intercultural citizenship is not developed in the programme of study for the new Citizenship curriculum beyond the teaching at Key stage 4 about the "diverse national, regional, religious and ethnic identities in the United Kingdom and the need for mutual respect and understanding" (DfE,2013). In these respects, the Council of Europe Recommendation has not been wholeheartedly embraced in UK national educational policy, and understanding of IE across schools appears patchy. For example, while the Irish National Council for Curriculum & Assessment has produced guidelines on

---

[6] Schools are required by the 2010 Equality Act, Public Sector Equality Duty to foster good relations between all protected characteristics including religion & belief.
http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/uploaded_files/EqualityAct/PSED/public_sector_equality_duty_guidance_for_schools_in_england_final.pdf

[7] This duty remains in place since 2007, as enshrined in the Education and Inspections Act 2006. However, the Coalition government has since revoked the requirement for Ofsted to inspect provision for the duty in schools.

intercultural education for schools, at the time of writing, there is no such equivalent in England.

At the same time, issues around diversity and community relations have come to fall largely within the domain of school RE, which is heavily inflected by ideas about community cohesion. This reflects a wider policy milieu driven by anxiety about religion and belief in contexts of diversity. This focus on cohesion has broad support among RE educators and policy-makers. Thus a recent report by the All Party Parliamentary Group on RE highlights the many ways in which RE may contribute to good community relations, and promotes the inclusion of IE approaches as a means of promoting deeper understanding, meaningful interaction and respect for difference (see APPG,2014). Within the RE community more widely, pedagogical approaches frequently incorporate the aims of IE, but it is not known how widespread the use of such approaches is.

An important dimension where it does appear is that it is frequently 'bought in' from external organizations such as 3FF in order to enhance RE lessons, or as part of a school's wider promotion of community cohesion.

The 3FF Approach

A number IE programmes for schools are currently run by 3FF, as follows:

Two skills workshops, The Art of Asking and The Art of Empathy, which prepare students for encounter with people from diverse backgrounds, cultures and beliefs. Students explore the importance of language and communication tools for creating positive relations between people of different beliefs. They practice tools and techniques for showing empathy towards others, especially those who are different to themselves and develop an awareness of the prejudice and the assumptions that are often made about people of different faiths and identify ways of overcoming them.

Encountering Faiths & Beliefs brings young, trained speakers of different faiths into the classroom to share short personal narratives, giving students a firsthand example of how people of different beliefs experience issues and relate to one another. Students have the opportunity to ask (often controversial) questions in a safe space and practice skills for creating positive relations between people of different beliefs.

Tools for Trialogue (T4T) is aimed at GCSE & A Level students, helping them to develop empathy around religious viewpoints on contemporary issues. Trained speakers from Muslim, Christian and Jewish backgrounds bring to life students' encounter with selected texts from scriptures on a particular theme, such as 'BLING! Beauty, Modesty & Clothing', 'The Environment' or 'Men and Women's Relationships'. Students learn about both about similarities and differences between traditions, and about interfaith dialogue and collaboration.

Faith School Linking provides opportunities for young people from different faith backgrounds to meet and work together on a variety of activities throughout the year. Schools

are guided through the linking process and provided with teacher training days, resources and expert intercultural advice.

As well as school based programmes and linking, 3FF also provides intercultural training for teachers, and educational resources created to help teachers deal with specific local and global issues. For example, "*I Saw it on the News*" provides a set of tips and tools for engaging with challenging issues in the classroom.

OUR CONSULTATION

A primary goal of this consultation is to explore how 3FF can best contribute to the development of intercultural education in these contexts. Over a period of 6 months, the project consulted with 20 organisations/people with expertise in education (RE and beyond) and related disciplines.

The consultation was in two parts. Firstly an initial briefing paper was sent out and participants were asked to respond by email. This had two aims: to document a series of roundtable discussions on RE previously hosted by 3FF; and to explore the links between RE and IE and the role of IE in schools in general. For a list of questions see Appendix A.

The second stage of the consultation consisted of a participatory event in which we explored further some of the questions raised in responses to the briefing paper and also looked more closely at issues around a whole school approach to IE. (Questions for this exercise are in Appendix B).

Responses to the consultation have been grouped together under the areas/issues discussed. At the end of each area of discussion, we have highlighted possible ways in which the issues could be taken forward, some of which are suggestions made by participants within the consultation process (headed 'Looking Forward').

INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION AND EXISTING PROVISION

As advocated by the Council of Europe and UNESCO, there is consensus that IE should take a whole school approach (See UNESCO, 2006, Council of Europe, 2011). That is to say that IE should be embedded in both the curriculum and the management and ethos of the school. This reflects the consensus that schools should adopt a holistic approach to IE, in co-operation with parents and local communities, and that the development of intercultural competencies be integral to all subjects. However, in the UK context, some subjects can be more easily aligned with IE than others, in terms of the knowledge and skills they develop. This consultation identified RE, Citizenship and SMSC provision as key areas in which there is obvious immediate complementarity. Thus these subjects are included in this consultation as a starting point.

IE and Religious Education

Our consultation revealed broad agreement that IE approaches are thought to meet some of the aims of RE, as stated in the NCFRE[8], and also enhance them. A longstanding critique of RE has been that it needs to incorporate a richer understanding of the diversity of religion[9] and IE is seen as making a significant contribution in this area, bringing pupils into contact with religion and belief as it is experienced and lived by them, each other, and their communities. There is broad agreement that through encounter, dialogue and interaction, people's beliefs and their interpreted meanings are brought to life, leading to greater understanding and respect.

> *"[IE approaches} provide a grounding in reality for the theoretical exploration of religion and belief. What the Qur'an (or other sacred text) says can be seen in practical expression in various cultures. This can lead to an exploration of different interpretations of sacred text and thus of the nature of the religion they belong to. Both breadth and depth are enhanced – enabling an examination of different ways of being religious within the same religion (breadth) and how texts and beliefs link to community and individual cultural expression (depth)".*

- As presented in the Council of Europe's reference book for schools (2007), the religious diversity aspect of IE can be taught through several existing learning approaches used in RE. The Interpretive Approach developed by Robert Jackson at the University of Warwick (see Jackson 1997) takes on board both "traditional' and "post-modern"[10] plurality of religion and belief and views the interaction between them as part of the "process" that is culture. Thus religious traditions are presented, "not as homogenous and bounded systems, but in ways that recognize diversity within religions and the uniqueness of each member, as well as the fact that each person is subject to many influences" (Keast, 2007 p63). Combining interpretive anthropology and hermeneutics, this is an active, reflexive approach which allows students to explore their own perspectives, comparing their own concepts with those of others.

Another key element identified in the consultation is the opportunity provided by IE for children, young people and teachers to explore questions of religion and belief together. Dialogue is at the heart of IE and intercultural communication and dialogical pedagogies have played an important part in RE for some time. Developed in Leicester schools by Julia Ipgrave, dialogical religious education has been successfully used in the classroom and beyond to explore diversity, share and learn from others and develop thoughtful, respectful engagement with difference (see Ipgrave, 2003).

---

[8] The Non Statutory Curriculum Framework for RE, published by the Religious Education Council, October 2013.

[9] This is highlighted in the 2007 Ofsted report Making Sense of Religion and in the 2013 report Religious Education: Realising the Potential

[10] "Traditional" plurality is the diversity of religious and ethnic groups found in society, whereas "post-modern" plurality refers to the individual, from any background, drawing on cultural ideas and practices from many possible sources .(Keast,2007,p24)

When done well, RE is regarded as capable of promoting understanding and respect for diversity and developing empathetic skills for engagement. An important factor in this is that IE necessarily promotes the idea of culture as a process, which immediately enlivens religion and presents it as 'lived' rather than primarily past, 'other', exotic, or tradition. In this sense, the consultation finds that IE can help RE to move away from the teaching of religions as static "blocks" of belief and practice to an understanding of religion "in terms of a dynamic relationship between individuals, the groups they identify with (sectarian, denominational, ethnic, cultural etc) and a broadly described religious tradition" (Keast, 2007 p32).

It was generally felt that IE approaches would be very beneficial in teacher training in RE (and more widely). Areas suggested were: dealing with controversial issues; the dynamics of religion and culture; and exploring the lived diversity of religion and belief through encounter. SACREs were also identified as places where training of this kind would be beneficial. Likewise, training for people who come into schools to talk about their beliefs.

The consultation finds, therefore, that IE can clearly complement RE and vice versa. However, there is concern that such approaches should enhance, rather than replace in-depth learning about beliefs, practices and traditions.

> *"While Intercultural Education has an attractiveness for those who believe RE is there to serve a community cohesion agenda it doesn't begin to meet the objectives of those who believe RE is there to serve a theological or intellectual agenda".*

Many are uncomfortable with the presumption that cohesion or integration is a central objective of RE and see the priority of RE as being the rigorous and analytical study of religion itself:

> *"RE would be better served, in my opinion, if it became much more rigorous and analytical for its own sake (that is: dealing with the nature of religion, sociology and psychology of religion, text studies, practice, politics and anthropology etc. Also asking the questions such as: What does it mean to take a religion seriously? And what role does religion have in UK society?"*

Looking forward

- IE organisations should explore links with the REC professional development committee, SACREs and Agreed Syllabus Conferences. One suggestion is to explore areas of commonality with the criteria of the RE Quality Mark
- Leaders in IE should link with RE support structures and organizations such as the RE Council, NATRE, AREIAC/ AULRE and produce workshops on IE in RE for inclusion at RE conferences
- IE organisations should link practically with RE based organisations such as RE:ONLINE to promote awareness of IE approaches

- Organisations should promote awareness of how IE in schools can contribute to meeting requirements of the 2010 Equalities Act with regards to religion & belief and the Community Cohesion duty.

Intercultural Education & Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development[11]

Despite some controversy over the meaning of SMSC and how it should be approached in schools, the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has long been put forward in legislation and guidance as central to education in the UK, though in practice this has changed signififcantly in character, and emphasis from period to period. As highlighted in a recent RSA report, the requirement of schools to develop the broader human qualities of their pupils has been marginalised due to the overwhelming pressure placed on them to deliver better exam results (RSA,2014)[12]. The side-lining of these skills in education runs counter to the growing recognition of the need for "personal and social skills, resilience and determination, cultural capital and character that help young people cope, adapt and thrive in an age of increasing uncertainty" (RSA, 2014 p11). Both IE and SMSC have in mind the broader outcome of education – well rounded, emotionally and intellectually open minded characters. Although not identified as aspects of intercultural education, Ofsted defines part of pupils' spiritual development as their 'interest in and respect for different feeling and values', part of social development as developing the skills to work and socialize with pupils from different religious and ethnic backgrounds and part of pupils' cultural development as their "interest in exploring, understanding of and respect for cultural diversity and the extent to which they understand, accept, respect and celebrate diversity, as shown by their attitudes to different religious, ethnic and socio-economic groups in the local, national and global communities" (Ofsted, 2013 in RSA, 2014). As highlighted in the RSA report, such skills are valued internationally, as demonstrated by plans for the UNESCO Learning Metrics Task Force, which will seek to track, along with literacy and numeracy, how well students in different countries are developing to be "citizens of the world" (Ibid).[13]

The cross-over between SMSC provision and IE are clear, yet our consultation suggests further investigation into the complementarities of the two might help lead to the development of approaches that meet wider (intercultural) educational goals. Part of the RSA investigation includes a model for the mapping of SMSC provision in schools. Our consultation suggested such an exercise for IE in schools, which would add much to the dimensions of SMSC identified.

---

[11] SMSC is shorthand for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

[12] The RSA report, Schools with Soul (2014) presents the first of the Investigate-Ed series, focusing on SMSC.

[13] The UNESCO/Brookings Summary report: Toward Universal Learning – Recommendations from the Learning Metrics Task Force can be viewed here: http://www.uis.unesco.org/Education/Documents/lmtf-summary-rpt-en.pdf

For example, interfaith activities such as school linking and speaker programmes can be seen not only as contributing to spiritual awareness but to cultural and social awareness, employability, and moral literacy and values.[14]

Intercultural Education & Citizenship

There is also thought to be important cross-over between IE and Citizenship. After a period of uncertainty, Citizenship is now firmly placed in the new National Curriculum and included in the Government's list of reformed GCSEs.[15] This consultation has highlighted areas in which IE and Citizenship might usefully work together, concerning especially learning about equalities legislation, human rights, community relations, and responsible, active citizenship. In terms of methods, IE approaches are seen as having much to offer.

> *"It may also be useful to cover conflict resolution and integration type subjects themselves in Citizenship classes to allow young people to air their concerns, as well as grow more confident about their identity by exploring where they (their families came from), and how they can use that to forge new more confident and positive identities whilst living in Britain today".*

Whilst IE and Citizenship may be complementary in some aspects, the notion of intercultural citizenship, as promoted by the Council of Europe is not fully incorporated in the curriculum. The Council of Europe sees IE, as a subset of Education for Democratic Citizenship[16] and supports a 'maximal' interpretation of citizenship education that embraces pedagogy shared with IE (a focus on dialogue and student self-reflexivity)[17] (see Jackson, 2007). An assessment of the extent to which it is embraced in provision in schools would require further research.

Looking forward

- The cross-over between SMSC, Citizenship and IE and possibilities for a new educational model incorporating IE should be further explored.

---

[14] See the School Linking Network has produced teaching resources and training on SMSC from an intercultural perspective: www.schoolslinkingnetwork.org.uk

[15] See press release from the Citizenship Foundation:
http://www.citizenshipfoundation.org.uk/main/news.php?n1094

[16] See http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/education/edc/Source/Charter/Charterpocket_EN.pdf

[17] Terence McLaughlin distinguishes between 'minimal' and 'maximal' approaches to citizenship education, in which the former is largely civics education (McLaughlin 1992, read in Jackson 2007)

- Citizenship education should incorporate the development of 'intercultural citizenship' as understood by the Council of Europe, which includes a religion & belief dimension[18].

The Added Value of Intercultural Education

The consultation illustrates how IE can be complementary to existing curricula and approaches. It has been concerned to get to grips with what IE contributes to a child's education in addition to what is statutorily provided. The consultation suggests a broad consensus that IE exposes young people to issues and experiences that are not always readily available elsewhere, including:

- a space for the learning about non-religious beliefs (particularly important in faith schools)[19]
- a space for asking questions around culture, belief and values, and further exploration of these
- exploring their own and others' identity
- addressing contentious issues
- working together with pupils from different backgrounds, promoting cohesion through actual experience of different communities
- addressing teachers' blind spots (especially approaches to issues that many teachers feel uncomfortable with)

Key skills highlighted included self-reflection, empathy, open-mindedness, critical thinking, respect for difference, and conflict resolution.

> *"At its best, IE provides young people with the knowledge, understanding and skills to understand, empathise with, respect and enjoy people from different cultures to their own, without losing any confidence in their own identity and culture. This results in an ability to navigate cultures in different ways – at a personal level with friends and colleagues from different cultures, professional and employment benefits, travel and a sense of world identity. The concept of multiple identities (complementary not exclusive) or deep identity (being truly confident in who one is, happy within one's skin!) is enhanced".*

---

[18] This echoes a recommendation of the REDCo project with regards to the incorporation of a religious dimension to education for citizenship

[19] Whilst it is recognized that an increasing number of Locally Agreed Syllabuses for RE include the study of non-religious beliefs, it was felt that this is an area that is not always given enough attention.

A WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH

In terms of a whole school approach to IE, a key message from the consultation is that 'one size does not fit all'. Schools may need an audit of current content and approaches, prior to the development of their whole school approach to IE. Likewise, individual schools will need individual approaches. Nevertheless, some key elements of a whole school approach were identified;

- Strong leadership to drive forward the IE agenda
- A clear vision and ethos of an 'intercultural school'
- Inclusivity - a participatory approach that ensures whole school buy-in and ownership
- A dynamic process – that as school demographics and cultures change and develop, so must the model for whole school IE
- Involves the wider community (parents, faith groups, employers)

Challenges in the implementation of a whole school approach

Some conceptual and practical challenges were identified with regard to a whole school approach to IE. In terms of getting people to work together, there are issues around time and commitment. It was also felt that there is reluctance or fear within senior leadership to engage with 'risky' learning, in which the outcomes are not easily assessed and can be uncomfortable.

One of the key challenges around IE is its lack of a clear definition, which can cloud its inherent value. This contributes to a lack of understanding by most teachers of the aims and objectives of IE. There was broad consensus that the need for clarity over the language and aims of IE are central to its promotion in schools, the wider communities and at policy level.

It was agreed that the involvement of the wider community is key to an inclusive IE. Of relevance here is Hewstone's[20] concept of 'indirect contact' – that 'just knowing someone who has had positive contact with an "other" leads to less prejudiced views. The idea of 'neighbourhood effects' can be applied to the development of whole school approaches, which seek to transform the social and cultural space as a whole. With regard to the wider community, however, there are issues around representation and participation. How is the 'community' identified and who within it should be asked to participate?

There is concern around how a school's approach to IE should be evaluated. There is general agreement that an evaluation process must be on-going, participatory and self-reflective. A whole school approach to IE should be embedded in the school's self-evaluation. On the individual level, the Intercultural Competencies and the Autobiography of Intercultural

---

[20] See http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZunC2u7pUd4

Encounter developed by the Council of Europe provide models for self-evaluation. However, this consultation did not find any whole school models for evaluation of IE.

It was felt that incentives were needed for schools to aspire to. One suggestion was of a quality mark or accreditation by which schools can achieve 'intercultural' status. Other suggestions included some sort of show case system, perhaps bringing in TV or social media.

Teacher training

Our consultation found support for the inclusion of IE and particularly the religion & belief dimension in both initial teacher training and continuing professional development for all teachers. The development of teachers own skills of empathy and self-reflection in relation to religion and belief was seen as very important. So too was the ability to facilitate discussions and deal with conflict in a way that is sensitive to and inclusive of the diversity of beliefs and convictions students may hold. This element of teacher training was also highlighted in the policy recommendations which came out of the REDCo project. [21]

Looking forward

- Non-school organizations working on IE could support the development of whole school approaches in the following ways:
- – brokering, facilitating and mediating relationships between the schools and wider community
- – providing training to teachers and external partners/speakers e.g. guidelines for encounters or help on what makes a good speaker
- – sharing of best practice
- – working together with schools, taking on board the work of the Council of Europe to develop incentives for schools and guidelines and/or models for 'interculturality' in schools
- External organisations should work together to promote a shared language around IE and familiarity with its aims.
- There is a role for external organisations in signposting to international materials such as those of the Council of Europe, the UNESCO 2006 guidelines and of organisations specialising in IE. One suggestion was the development of an intercultural education E-course.

---

[21] See http://www.redco.uni-hamburg.de/cosmea/core/corebase/mediabase/awr/redco/research_findings/REDCo_policy_rec_eng.pdf

- There is a need for more IE skills-focused training for teachers and ways of making this part of more ITT and CPD should be explored with the National College for Teaching and Leadership.

IE AND INTEGRATION

IE is aimed at promoting better relations between people and the creation of a more harmonious socio-cultural space. The European Commission REDCo project, led by Robert Jackson has demonstrated that students believe that peaceful coexistence depends on knowledge about each other's religion and worldviews and sharing common interests as well as doing things together.[22]

However, as with RE, there is some concern about the politicising of IE as part of an integration or cohesion agenda. Such concerns derive, in part, from a rejection of one-way models of integration embraced in much policy. IE embraces a 'two-way' and 'multi-stream' model of integration, in which people learn from and about each other and develop attitudes of respect and appreciation to diversity through a process of meaningful interaction.

IE is widely viewed as essential to expanding ideas of integration to go beyond "migrants, minorities and targets". Intercultural dialogue and encounter also develops skills of self-reflection, leading to a deeper understanding of the self, the other and relationships across difference. In this sense, IE is about training a generation of young people and future leaders to deal effectively and positively with diversity - as one respondent put it, creating 'skilled intercultural navigators'.

Schools can thus seen as incubators of positive relations, which extend out into wider society and as such present an important opportunity for long-term integration.

Looking forward

- Further research should explore the potential contribution of IE as part of a long-term integration strategy.
- DfE should explore, with IE organisations, the idea of a schools' 'charter for diversity', which, rather than narrowly focusing on examples of 'cohesion', encourages schools to promote the skills, knowledge and attitudes for positive engagement with diversity

---

[22] See research findings from the REDCo project; http://www.redco.uni-hamburg.de/cosmea/core/corebase/mediabase/awr/redco/research_findings/REDCo_exhibition.pdf

REFERENCES

All Party Parliamentary Group on RE/Miller, J (2014) RE and Good Community Relations; Cohesive schools, Cohesive communities, Cohesive society.

Council of Europe:

2008 White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue, *Living Together As Equals in Dignity,* Council of Europe Publishing, Strasbourg.

2010 Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education, Strasbourg.

2011 Living Together – Combining Diversity and Freedom in 21st Century, Council of Europe Publishing, Strasbourg.

2008 (Recommendation CM/Rec(2008)12 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the dimension of religions and non-religious convictions within intercultural education.

Department for Education, UK, (2013), *Statutory guidance - National curriculum in England: citizenship programmes of study for key stages 3 and 4,* (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-citizenship-programmes-of-study/national-curriculum-in-england-citizenship-programmes-of-study-for-key-stages-3-and-4)

Ipgrave, J (2003) Dialogue, Citizenship and Religious Education in Jackson, R (ed.) *International Perspectives on Citizenship, Education and Religious Diversity*, RoutledgeFalmer, London.

Jackson, R (1997) *Religious Education: An interpretive approach* London, Hodder & Stoughton).

Jackson, R (2007) *European institutions and the contribution of studies of religious diversity to education for democratic citizenship* in Jackson, R. Miedema,S. Weisse, W. & Willaime, J-P, *Religion and Education in Europe: Developments, Contexts and Debates*, Waxmann, Munster Keast, 2007, Religious diversity and intercultural education: a reference book for schools, Council of Europe

Jackson, R (2014) *Signposts - Policy and practice for teaching about religions and non-religious world views in intercultural education*, Council of Europe

OFSTED (2013) *Religious Education: Realising the Potential*

OFSTED (2007) *Making Sense of Religion*

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE/ODIHR) (2007) *Toledo Guiding Principles on teaching About Religions and Beliefs in Public Schools*

RSA (2014) *Schools with Soul: A new approach to spiritual, moral, social and cultural education*

Thorhildir Olafsdottir.O (2011) *Understanding and valuing Diversity: Council of Europe Activities in the Field of Intercultural Education* at the 2011 International Symposium on Interculturalism, Council of Europe.

UNESCO (2006) *Guidelines on Intercultural Education*

Appendix A – Questions posed in the initial briefing paper.

For a full copy of the paper, email m.shaw@gold.ac.uk

1. What are the benefits of IE?
2. How do IE approaches meet the aims of RE?
3. What role can IE approaches play in improving the 'breadth and depth' of knowledge about religion and belief?
4. How could IE approaches be incorporated into existing and future structures   and networks to support RE?
5. How do IE approaches meet the aims of SMSC and Citizenship curricula?
6. How can IE approaches best support current curricula? How might they be incorporated?
7. How could IE best be incorporated into whole school approaches?
8. How can IE approaches best support teacher training in RE and more widely?
9. Who should be involved in IE approaches? (parents/employers/faith groups?)
10. How might the benefits of IE approaches be best articulated to different types of schools?
11. How could the benefits of IE be articulated at policy level?

Appendix B – Questions posed at a consultation event, March 2014.

1. How is IE received in schools? What are the challenges & opportunities?
2. What does IE contribute that isn't found in current curricula and provision?
3. What might a whole school approach to IE look like?
4. What are the challenges in involving the wider community in a whole school approach and how might organizations like 3FF assist?
5. How might a school's provision of IE be evaluated?
6. How do you see the relationship between IE and integration?