



EUROPA CONFERENCE REPORT

SCHOOLS FOR THE NEW EUROPE

HELD AT REWLEY HOUSE, OXFORD, UK

3 – 4 JUNE 2010



INTRODUCTION

The English Trust for European Education (ETEE) focuses on European bilingual teaching and learning and the European dimension in school curricula across the whole age-range. The aim of this and other ETEE conferences is to bring together schools and services which are committed to and engaged in bilingual education within the frame of EU citizenship entitlements, rights and responsibilities. We seek to provide a forum for sharing good practice and where issues and challenges can be brought forward and discussed. Principal ETEE concerns at the moment involve the widening out of the European School (ES) system and the positions and curricula of Type II and Type III ES schools. ETEE's watching brief at a UK level is the evolving of the European School

Culham into a state academy, viewed as a case study. The requirements and ramifications of this development must, we maintain, preserve education for bilingualism, European dimensions and the European Baccalaureate as the final examination. A new generation of European Schools is emerging but curriculum and teacher training for that curriculum have yet to be determined.

To address the above aspirations this year's conference was called in order to re-consider the ingredients of a "European" education. It was hosted by ETEE at the Oxford University Department of Continuing Education in Rewley House, which provided an attractive and comfortable venue for the event as well as delicious meals over the two days. The conference would not have been possible without the continuing generous support of NPower. Additional sponsorship was given by Mouchel, an international company helping with technicalities of the development of the future Culham European Academy. Oxford University Press and European Schoolbooks were also sponsors and were present on June 4th with their respective book stalls. ETEE is most grateful to all these supporters.

This is a summary report of the one and one-half days of the conference, that is, the afternoon of June 3rd and the full day of June 4th. The conference programme for both days and the list of participants are found as the final sections of this report. Summaries of break-out discussion sessions are attached as Annexes. I wish to thank the conference scribes (Oxford University graduate students) and my fellow Trustees for their notes on the sessions, which have allowed me to complete this report. Any errors or misrepresentations are my own and I gratefully accept comments, corrections and other feedback on what follows.

Lynn Erler
2010 Conference Convenor

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PROCEEDINGS – JUNE 3RD

Preliminary seminar:

New Forms of European Schooling

This first afternoon of the conference took place in the Tawny Room of Rewley House. It was a unique opportunity to meet Mrs Renée Christmann, the Secretary General of the European Schools, who had come to the UK from Brussels for meetings at the European School, Culham, earlier that day. She kindly agreed to join us at the *Europa* conference to which she contributed not only through her presentations about the European Schools, the European Baccalaureate and the climate at the European Commission but also by answering many, sometimes difficult, questions from participants.

John Sayer convened this preliminary seminar and was instrumental in paving the way for informed discussions. He devised the outline topics and wrote a series of positively invaluable background briefing notes, or papers, which were sent around to attendees beforehand. The contents of these notes had been extensively researched by John and were then clearly presented, making them approachable while yet richly informative in their detail.



The briefing notes are:

- 1. The future for the European Schools Types I, II, III**
- 2. Relationships across different European School Types and Outreach**
- 3. The European Curriculum: National & Inter-governmental recognition**
- 4. Outreach to and from other European school initiatives**
- 5. The European Baccalaureate: Reform and Expansion**

All notes are available from Lynn Erler lynn.erler@etee.org.uk

Summary

European Schools, enlargement and the future for the European Baccalaureate

Renée Christmann is Secretary-General for the European Schools, and responsible for the organisation of both the 27-member-State European Schools Board of Governors for the 14 Type I schools and the European Schools Board of Inspectors which controls and monitors the European Baccalaureate and accreditation of all schools which use it. Mrs Christmann

brings to this key position within the European Commission a background of international diplomacy and leadership in schools, and was formerly Principal of the European School at Varese, Italy.

The European Schools, administered by the European Commission, were established as a service to personnel engaged in major EU projects, but several of these schools are now being



extended due to changes that have happened to those projects. Mrs Christmann outlined current developments for these European Schools, following recommendations from the European Parliament, including the recent widening of accreditation for the European Baccalaureate and extensions to ‘Type II’ and pilot ‘Type III’ schools, not confined to EU project locations. There are many issues for future governance of the European Schools. In addition, there is a need to build relationships with emerging

local and national models of European education initiatives.

The EB has been running for half a century but has until now been confined to the small number of European Schools set up for the families of those engaged in major EU projects. There is finally a response to the pressure from the Council of Ministers and European Parliament to make it more widely accessible. Given the dissatisfaction with several national or regional leaving examinations, including, for instance, England’s GCSE and A levels, and given the mobility of students for first degrees across Europe, the European Baccalaureate could now come into its own, beyond the European Schools context. Lively discussions ensued over the desire of participants to support this development.

Following the session, there was time for informal chats and then a reception was held in the Hidden Garden at Rewley House.



PROCEEDINGS – June 4th

Conference participants were welcomed by Lynn Erler on behalf of the ETEE Trustees. The concept behind the programme was explained as pertaining to the challenge of identifying essential ingredients or characteristics of a European school curriculum appropriate for children and families. This must include entitlements alongside wider curriculum facets such as the roles of parents, cross-cultural contacts and programmes of non-governmental organisations. But what are these and what do they bring? In addition, there are issues around language learning. Living and working in and with more than one language is a daily experience for a vast number of people currently living in Europe, even in England although this latter fact is scarcely recognised. How are children being given the opportunity to learn another language? How are the teachers of a “European” curriculum to be trained?



In
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The structure of the day entailed three plenary sessions. The first two were followed by break-out discussion groups for identifying and addressing issues. The groups were led by experts in their respective fields. Summaries of these sessions appear in Annexes 1-7 of this report.

Plenary Session: Putting Europe into Education – Professor Frank Furedi

Professor Furedi, sociologist at University of Kent, Canterbury, and noted social critic, was introduced by Paddy Carpenter, European consultant and a long-time supporter of ETEE’s aims.

Professor Furedi spoke about what constitutes “Europe”, if we are going to put it into education. Today’s Europe can be viewed as the manifestation of reconciliation when one thinks of the long centuries of wars which have gone before. But Europe has also always been an intermingling of peoples which is a strength. What is happening now in terms of immigration and cross-fertilisation of ideas and cultures has not happened to a lesser degree in times past. In fact there have been eras of much pan-Europeanisation in arts, sciences and education. Consider the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance when as a matter of course a student travelled to another country, for instance Italy, as part of a formal education. We might well look at the education taking place in such times to enrich our view of tolerance, openness and cultural exchange. There is, then, great depth to the history of Europe that is positive and potentially fructifying for education in Europe today. Every parent generation has a responsibility to transmit its selection from this culture as a framework from which to shape the future. A multicultural Europe must not mean an uncultured Europe scrapping the



past. The common European heritage, including respect for differences, has to be a living presence in schools. Children's rights do not mean that what children want is always right. Their rights include an entitlement to access to the finest achievements and insights of mankind. This should serve as the foundation for what we seek to identify and bring into our schools as specifically European.

Morning workshop sessions

These were input-led sessions each introduced and led by an invited speaker. The brief was to present an over-view of how policy has been put into practice with regard to specific aspects of a European education.



- (1) *Developing active European citizenship: proposals for schools* – Dr Mairin Hennebery
Summary in Annex 1
- (2) *European Policy and bilingual educational futures* – Prof Kalypso Nicolaïdis
Summary in Annex 2 TBC
- (3) *How can the European Baccalaureate serve the future Europe?* – Jim Campbell,
Renée Christmann
Summary in Annex 3
- (4) *EU policy and practice in education and human rights* – Paddy Carpenter
Summary in Annex 4

Plenary Session 2: Sharing good practice in bilingual schooling

Lynn Erler introduced the three plenary speakers, who, individually, gave brief introductions to the particular model of bilingual education in their respective schools:

Simon Sharron, Headteacher of the European School at Culham

Judith Woodfield, Deputy Head of Chenderit Comprehensive

Marc Wolstencroft, Headteacher of Wix Primary School, Wandsworth

Simon Sharron

There are some cross-overs between Chenderit and the European School at Culham in terms of CLIL (Content and Language Integrated teaching/learning) at the secondary level. In the European School system, though, CLIL is not introduced until Year 9 when geography and history are taught in the second language. This L2 is begun as language lessons in Year 8. The situation is slightly more complex than in English comprehensives because more than 66% of Culham pupils



are not L1 English speakers. A good number of these receive their core subject teaching in their mother tongue, for instance French, German, Italian, Dutch, according to the Section they are in. Therefore their L2 is English which they have already had in good dollops from the age of 6/7 at ES primary level. In secondary L2 English continues in lessons such as European Hours, PE, Art, Music, ICT, and Economics. A key aspect of European School education is mother tongue teaching by native speakers of core subjects. Alongside this is the L2 in CLIL for history and geography, and possibly a third and fourth language, all examined in the European Baccalaureate. Culturally European Schools are special because numerous nationalities rub along together side by side in the classroom and, just as importantly, outside it. The provision in the future Culham Academy is very much going to depend on the linguistic profile of the Reception Class or F1 cohorts. Eventually, because Culham will remain an all-age school, there is hope of a Key Stage 1 bilingual development.

Judith Woodfield

Judith Woodfield introduced Chenderit School, an 11-18 comprehensive in rural Northamptonshire with Arts specialist status. As part of its goal to move from good to outstanding, the school set up a new initiative in which all pupils in Year 7 (11-12 year-olds)



learn ICT, Geography or PSHE through the medium of French or German, alongside their normal language lessons. Judith, a geography teacher, has been the driving force behind this development, inspired by the successful introduction of immersion language teaching (often called Content and Language Integrated Learning, or CLIL) at her previous school. In normal language lessons, the language needed and used during the CLIL lessons, for instance in geography, is developed, practised and reinforced at the linguistic level. During the content-based lessons the pedagogical focus is on the concepts being taught, not necessarily

on the language. A video was shown with examples of learners in CLIL lessons. Students' interest and enthusiasm for learning the foreign language has grown by leaps and bounds due to the fascination of mastering concepts formulated in the foreign language.

Marc Wolstencroft

Marc Wolstencroft is the Head of Wix Primary, a unique school in South London sharing its premises with a French primary school, École de Wix, a subsidiary and feeder school of the Lycée Français in Kensington. From September 2005, all the children at Wix Primary School started to learn French, and in 2006 a joint bi-lingual intake class was introduced, with children following the national curriculum for England and the national curriculum for France. Each year a new bi-lingual intake class has joined.

The two teachers, one English, one French, who are responsible for each class work together to harmonise their curricula across the board in all subjects. Each teacher must see that the 28 children – often with a wide range of mother tongue, home languages – are able to meet the standards of the respective curriculum. This includes the required Key Stage 1 and 2 tests and the French national standards. Each



Year Group is subject to inspectors from both nations. And all are successful! Inspection results have been very good, testifying to children's learning the respective national curriculum requirements in only 2 ½ days a week! This innovative programme is exemplary,

creating bilingual French-English children (a considerable number of whom are *ab initio* language learners) while maintaining high standards in all areas of the curriculum.



An excellent buffet lunch was prepared and served by Rewley House. The pleasant venue of an airy, light room opened via French doors on to a patio where participants could enjoy the sun and informal conversations. We had to bid farewell to Mrs Renée Christmann, Secretary General of the European Schools, who contributed so much to the conference on both days. Her insights and concepts provided clear

inspiration for hope regarding future directions of the wider family of European Schools and for the prospects of the European Baccalaureate.



Afternoon workshop sessions

Two of the three afternoon sessions included substantial input. All sessions were led by experts and all evoked lively discussions which could have enjoyed a much longer span of time than was actually planned and allowed.



(1) *Europe in and across the curriculum* – Angus Roberts, Jim Campbell

Summary in Annex 5

(2) *Preparing bilingual education for all* – Jackie Holderness, Gabriela Meier
Summary in Annex 6

(3) *The wider school, parents, the role of NGO's* – Barbara Macleod, John Sayer
Summary in Annex 7

Plenary Session 3: Teachers preparing for bilingual European education – Dr Shirley Lawes

This presentation explored some of the possible principles that could underpin a European model of initial teacher education that both take account of and transcend particular contexts and systems. It was argued that language teacher education is or should be at the cutting edge of developments and that initial teacher education for foreign languages is in a privileged position to break down some of the barriers that exist between European nations in terms of professional qualifications and training. The focus on language teacher education was seen as important



because in the context of a European education, a foreign language can be the vehicle for the teaching of other curriculum subjects, and thus *how* language is taught and *how* it is learned must be seen to be central to every teacher's professional knowledge. This has implications for teacher training across Europe.

Some issues that were seen as problematic were brought forward, notably the need to move from the prevailing ethos of local contexts in education. This means we as educators recognise principles that rise above cultural identities and parochial concerns. Given European diversity we clearly identify common principles and practices that transcend narrow national confines, that may seek to make education a unifying rather than divisive force in the world. What teachers need to know was considered, and how a European-wide approach to teacher education might be achieved. It was argued that common to all European teacher education should be a substantial body of academic and professional knowledge which is provided at university level, as well as a corpus of practical skill acquired in supported school experience so that teachers become autonomous educational thinkers with intellectual independence as well as competent practitioners.

In conclusion -

Thanks were expressed by Lynn Erler to all concerned. She concluded the proceedings of the day with a brief introduction for Lord Michael Jay of Ewelme, ETEE patron and founder of CLASS. Lord Jay extolled the efforts of ETEE in pulling the conference together and also thanked the speakers. He praised the lively engagement of the participants in the issues that were raised throughout the day and the potentially fruitful discussions and contacts that were made. His expressed his commitment to the devolvement of the European School Culham into a state academy which could express many of the ideas that were the topics of the conference, particularly the school's anticipated specialisms of science and languages. It was an encouraging conclusion to a long, intensive but intriguing and rewarding day.



3. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Our special thanks are also due to Oxford graduate students Daria Dachs, Kasia Franas, Anna Horvai, and Sara Smith for their excellent work as scribes.

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Full details of the English Trust for European Education can be found on our website: www.ete.org.uk.