

LEEF Policy - **Shaking it up workshop 1** , 3 April, 2019

Notes from Campaigns group

SEED Campaign:

- Ed Act - highest level of influence so very ambitious
- A long lead time for any changes to be made HOWEVER the 1988 (?) Education Act led to radical changes.
- The legislation (or the legislative process) is not well known to many people in the group
- The language proposed for the changes:
 - o could be easy to ignore
 - o could be open to interpretation
 - o expresses a separation between us and environment, it's anthropocentric, which some consider to be problematic
- Other policies that were discussed as being worth influencing
 - o Exam boards
 - o Ofsted
- Other mechanism for influence: use 'convening power' of certain members, or of LEEF to invite/engage with people who make or influence policy.

Teacher Campaign

- it's a symbolic acknowledgement of the problem
- pace of the process is quicker; changes being sought could potentially have quicker impact than the education act
- change comes down to head teachers
- it's an approach that is occurring right at the interface between teachers and government (rather than through intermediary policy/representative bodies). This has the potential to get people's (and media's?) attention.
- It's a radical approach
- An engaging topic
- Their ask/request needs to include different language or emphasis for primary age vs secondary age
- There may be a disconnect between the language of crisis, the idea of radical action that the campaign is about, and what is being asked for. That is, that changing the curriculum is slow and that changes occurring in society as a consequence of curriculum interventions will take a long time.
- That the role of the head teachers is crucial to change in schools/education
- Important organisations for influence as part of strike, or to influence to get involved: NEU (National Education Union) and UCU (University and College Union)
- To create change, education politics needs to work across/break down political factions
- MATs (Multi-academy trusts) are important audience/partners for the strike action. They have a lot of influence, and direct influence, of what goes on in schools.

Notes from Formal Education group

Note: we didn't talk specifically about the two options put forward; Green Party GCSE or IB programme but broadly about these as an approach.

Overall feeling was that this is a useful starting point but they are optional and not going to make the impact required.

Comments summarised on the flip chart in the order they came up in conversation:

- optional
- good start
- have as many hooks/ routes in as possible
- What about primary? (both programmes being discussed were for secondary schools)
 - need topics with accessible resources
 - resources where the teachers will look, i.e. twinkl
- EE has done better in primary schools so far because less subject barriers
 - we should be breaking down these barriers
 - more real world learning
- Young people are currently demanding to 'know more' about CC so more knowledge based learning is required
- These programmes are achievable in the current system
- Having a school department for a subject gives it status
 - also important to demonstrate there are future careers in the field
- There is the will from teachers but not the time
- Does main stream media, i.e. CBBC follow the curriculum in terms of content in shows?
- If these courses were available
 - would students pick them?
 - would schools bother with it?
 - maybe if it was an easy qualification, but then that undermines its importance.
- now more competition and streamlining of subjects because of the E-Bac, maybe even harder to get new subjects in
- These courses could be distraction from making bigger change and a tick box for the Govt. so they can say they have done something.
- Could it be a useful interim step?
- Where is it best to put campaign energy; small steps or bigger change
- Could a school run a course 1 day a week as a pilot (in response to student strikes/ Fridays for Future)
- Do we need to change the whole system
 - Victorian school model
- We need to look at other subjects which don't fit in a box/ silo; STEM, Arts
 - except arts subjects are currently being dismantled in state schools
- What bracket would a new GCSE fit into?
- Who would be ready to teach it?
- Citizenship, RE and IT are all compulsory, could EE follow the same structure as these? perhaps as half a GCSE so impetus to take it.

A tangential conversation was had about 'take care of the environment' being one of the British Values on the citizenship test but doesn't feature in the Fundamental British Values which are compulsory to teach in Primary schools.

Notes from Youth/School Initiatives group

Eco-Schools

- Global Eco-Schools programme is the 'largest global sustainable schools programme'.
- Has arguably been more successful than any other programme in bringing environmental issues and action into schools. Adds to 'normalisation' of eco-friendly schools (ie. schools want to remain competitive and keep up with others).
- In some countries Eco-Schools programmes are more ambitious/radical than others - there are some interesting differences.
- Success within school depends on variety of factors, including the strength of the group, buy-in from senior leaders and teachers, and motivation of students.
- Problems: Vulnerability to funding. Funding for Eco-Schools has been drastically cut in the UK. There used to be well-funded central co-ordination, regular training, networks and teacher training.
- Concerns/questions: How successful has it been in engaging with the curriculum? To what extent is the whole school involved?
- Is it too tokenistic? (schools think that they have 'done their bit'?) Could/should the criteria for achieving a Green Flag Award be more ambitious?
- Ideas/thoughts: Would schools engage better with a financial incentive? eg. boost to pupil premium?
- Questions: Do we now need something bigger and better? Is it radical enough and far reaching enough in the UK? Or perhaps now is the time it should be taking off? (ie. in context of #SchoolStrike4Climate)

#iwill4nature

The #iwill4nature initiative is part of the #iwill campaign which aims to embed social action into the lives of 10-18 year olds, and to grow environmental youth social action during the **Year of Green Action (2019)**.

- Strong and influential network with a lot of buy-in from groups and organisations across the sector
- Offers a platform (eg. case studies & social media) for the good work that is being done, and amplifies actions. Partners take a pledge to increase level of engagement of young people in social/environmental action.
- Questions: How long will the support last? Is it time limited/too conservative?
- Make the most of it during the 2019 Year of Green Action!?

#SchoolStrike4Climate

<https://www.schoolstrike4climate.com/>

- More 'youth-led' than other initiatives
- Good global links & media attention - powerful in capturing public imagination
- Needs to reach beyond the more privileged students
- Definitely a 'watch this space' movement
- Considered too controversial for some people/organisations to fully support due to pupils taking time out of school
- What can we as teachers and educators do to support?