Good Practice Guidelines

Teaching about Development

Poverty, climate change and inequality are some of the greatest challenges facing humanity today, and countries and people everywhere working together in partnership to achieve the United Nations Global Goals for Sustainable Development is key to addressing these challenges. Ireland is playing an important part in this global effort to create a better world and a better future.

It is vital that children are educated about these issues and the ways that they can contribute to a better world, as solution-focused global citizens. Children's ability to understand, engage and undertake action is related to their age and personal experience. Teaching about development and related issues must be done in an age appropriate way, and in a way that is sensitive to the diversity of children in each classroom setting.

You are best placed to know about the needs and interests of your own class, but you might find some of the guidelines below useful to consider as you embark, with your pupils, on your Our World Irish Aid Awards journey.

Good Practice Guidelines

Teaching about Development

The following are good practice guidelines for teaching about development and related issues, and are particularly relevant for teachers engaging, with their pupils, in the Our World Irish Aid Awards:

DO

Create a safe inclusive space for open and respectful engagement, for example by agreeing or reminding pupils about their class contract, facilitating learner voice through participative methodologies, pose open questions, framing issues using a human rights perspective, encouraging meaningful action based on learning and reflection etc.

Give a balanced picture by showing that every country has problems, but also has many positive features

Show a broad range of features of life in a country, regardless of where it stands in terms of development

Encourage thinking about the causes of poverty, underdevelopment, migration, inequality etc

Emphasise that development cooperation, aid or assistance is about partnership between countries and peoples rather than an act of charity. Pupils will understand this best if shown examples of projects or programmes which have made a difference to the lives of people they can relate to, for example children and young people or families.

Emphasise the important roles that governments in many developing countries have in fighting poverty and hunger and how Ireland supports governments around the world to bring about improvements for all.

Try to make links between the global and the local, the connections we all have to people and places near and far. Emphasise that each person can contribute to development through their own decisions and actions, for example, by supporting Fairtrade, consuming less, supporting campaigns for human rights etc.

AVOID

Intentional or unintentional unwanted/negative focus on children from the countries under discussion or with experience of the issues being examined, e.g. poverty, migration, asylum seeking or direct provision etc

Presenting our world as a place where the poor are powerless and unable to help themselves

Stereotyping people or countries, for example as old versus modern, overfed versus underfed, educated versus ignorant, advantaged versus disadvantaged etc.

Generalising - for example, presenting developing countries as only populated by poor people

Presenting development in terms of huge global problems about which we can do little

Using stimulus material (e.g. photographs or video) or producing outputs (e.g. drama, story etc) which does not respect the human dignity of those portrayed, for example, depicting starving, or dying people

Good Practice Guidelines
Useful links:

GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS
FULL REPORT
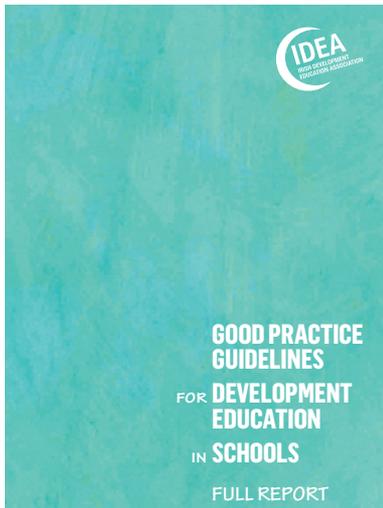
Irish Development Education Association (IDEA). Good Practice Guidelines for Development Education in Schools.

www.ideaonline.ie/pdfs/IDEA-Good-Practice-Schools-Full-Report_144dpi_single_pages.pdf

IDEA. 2019. Code of Good Practice for Development Education in Ireland.

www.ideaonline.ie/uploads/files/A4_Code_Principles_Landscape_web.pdf

Intercultural EDUCATION IN THE PRIMARY SCHOOL
GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOLS
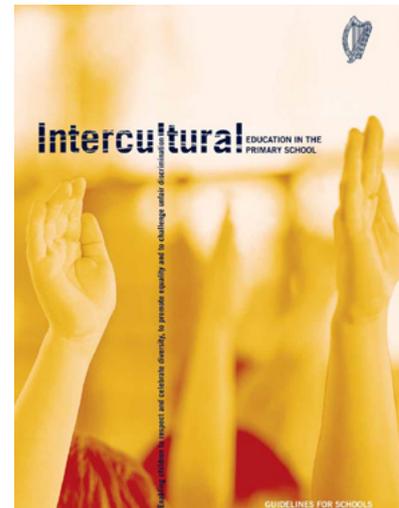
DES. (2005). Intercultural Education Guidelines for Primary Schools.

www.curriculumonline.ie/getmedia/236745b0-a222-4b2a-80b1-42db0a3c7e4c/Intercultural-Education-in-Primary-School_Guidelines.pdf

Tackling Controversial Issues in the Citizenship Classroom
A Resource for Citizenship Education
CDVEC Curriculum Development Unit in collaboration with the Professional Development Service for Teachers
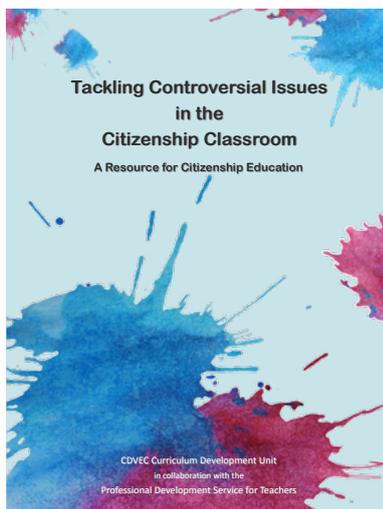
CDVEC Curriculum Development Unit. Tackling controversial issues in the Citizenship classroom: A resource for Citizenship Education

developmenteducation.ie/resource/tackling-controversial-issues-in-the-citizenship-classroom-a-resource-for-citizenship-education/

TEACHING CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES
A guide for teachers
OXFAM
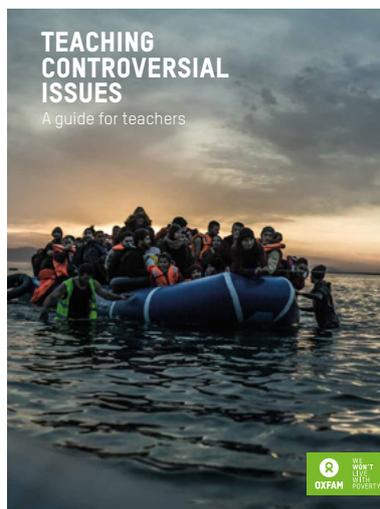
Oxfam UK. (2018). Teaching Controversial Issues: A Guide for Teachers.

policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/teaching-controversial-issues-a-guide-for-teachers-620473

TEACHING CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES
Professional development pack for the effective teaching of controversial issues developed with the participation of Cyprus, Ireland, Montenegro, Spain and the United Kingdom and the support of Albania, Austria, France and Sweden
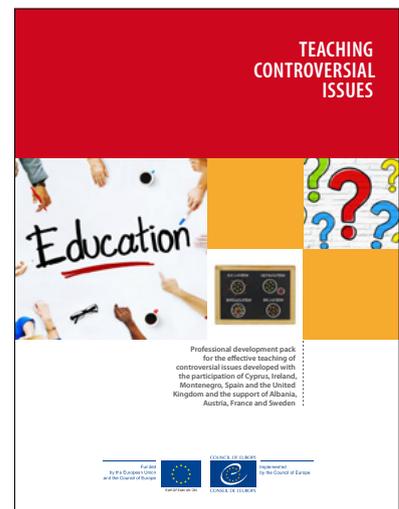
Council of Europe. (2016). Teaching Controversial Issues: Professional development pack for the effective teaching of controversial issues developed with the participation of Cyprus, Ireland, Montenegro, Spain and the United Kingdom and the support of Albania, Austria, France, and Sweden.

edoc.coe.int/en/human-rights-democratic-citizenship-and-interculturalism/7738-teaching-controversial-issues.html