

Besides increasing the status of the programme, linking EkoSkola activities to the curriculum ensures that EkoSkola is truly integrated within the school community. The general strategy suggested is that of infusing environmental education concepts into the already existing subjects and **not** that of presenting a new subject. Besides increasing an awareness of the environment, the weaving of an environmental education dimension in a particular subject enriches the subject concerned and thus makes it more relevant and interesting.

This infusion need not be a laborious task. The amount of linking is dependent on how the curriculum is structured and on the teachers' willingness to engage in this initiative. Teachers might introduce environmental education principles through incidental teaching or even through planned systematic teaching aimed at covering a particular aspect of the curriculum.

### **The National Curriculum**

In the absence of a national policy on environmental education, it is no wonder that there is no mention of environmental education in the National Curriculum guidelines. Nevertheless, the guidelines propose several measures that facilitate the infusion of environmental education in the educational system.

The National Curriculum advocates a learner centred education by:

- ✓ promoting thematic teaching ... interdisciplinarity,
- ✓ ensuring relevance of knowledge to the learner's experiences,
- ✓ encouraging active learner participation,
- ✓ helping the development of critical thinking and participatory skills,
- ✓ presenting an assessment policy promoting a learner oriented pedagogy,
- ✓ catering for a life-long education, and
- ✓ promoting a global perspective.

The National Curriculum also promotes decentralisation by:

- ✓ encouraging interaction with the community and NGO participation,
- ✓ assigning more autonomy for schools, and
- ✓ promoting action research.

The principles outlined in the National Curriculum mirror the basic principles underlying the EkoSkola programme. Participation in the EkoSkola programme should thus be viewed as a tangible opportunity to implement the National Curriculum.

The list below broadly illustrates some ideas how environmental education can be integrated with certain curriculum subjects. For more specific ways of integrating environmental education with various subjects in the curriculum, teachers are encouraged to visit the Eco-Schools International Co-ordination website on <http://www.eco-schools.org/>.

### **Languages**

- discussing the various aspects of specific environmental issues
- report writing and keeping minutes during meetings
- writing letters to: politicians, education authorities, councillors, community leaders, newspaper editors, business persons, industrialists, etc.

### **Mathematics**

- designing and conducting surveys
- collating results and presenting them as graphs
- carrying out mathematical calculations
- managing finances

### **Religion**

- learning to consider the environment as a gift from God to be enjoyed by all humanity
- considering different ways how children can become stewards of creation
- understanding how a person's irresponsible actions may have a negative impact on others

### **Social Sciences**

- reading/producing maps of the school and the locality and using keys to highlight important sites
- understanding how humans interact with their environment
- using photographs, documents, oral accounts and other sources of information to learn how certain places and lifestyles have changed throughout the years

### **Natural Sciences**

- making observations and gathering data about an environmental problem
- exploring various habitats and the adaptations of plants and animals living in them
- investigating different materials and how they are used
- looking at energy use, loss and conservation

## **ICT**

- using spreadsheet software to organise and present research results
- using publishing software to publish reports
- using presentation software to prepare presentations about specific projects

## **PSD**

- choosing healthy food and healthy lifestyles
- developing communication skills to improve the sharing of ideas
- developing interpersonal skills to help children work in groups

## **Technology Education**

- designing and building a waste separation point based on the various properties of the different waste fractions
- designing and making a waste compacter

## **Art & Design**

- drawing murals and producing sculptures to embellish the school
- producing posters, leaflets, stickers and badges to support campaigns
- organising art festivals and exhibitions celebrating the school's progress in becoming an EkoSkola.

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Requests for more information and queries can be referred to the EkoSkola national co-ordinator:

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