Democratic governance of schools

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1. Introduction

This manual is part of a series, collectively a "toolkit" designed and produced by the Council of Europe to help schools and other educational institutions to promote and develop Education for Democratic Citizenship (EDC – see Appendix II). EDC is a matter of paramount importance to the Council if the 46 member states are truly to progress together along the path of democracy: it lies at the heart of ensuring that the next generation of young citizens are prepared and equipped to play their democratic part – in their own communities, in their wider societies and in the framework of Europe as a whole. EDC is thus a theme that is mentioned many times throughout this volume, as it is in all the publications that make up the EDC toolkit.

What does this manual do?

This is a tool for the democratic governance of *schools* but it is applicable to all kinds of educational institutions and, indeed, other places where education of the young takes place. The word school is used for the sake of simplicity, not in any attempt to exclude other forms or settings. Similarly, those learning in such places will be called "students", though it must be remembered that this term encompasses the very youngest children (who are never too young to live and learn democracy and democratic citizenship) as well as young adults.

The tool is designed to help readers to gauge how their school contributes to their students' EDC, and thus to their preparation for adult citizenship in a democracy, by looking at the ways in which the school operates from day to day – and the ways in which people behave. So this is not really about teaching citizenship in schools: nor is it about the theory or principles of democracy, of democratic education, or even of EDC. It is intended as a practical tool to bridge the gap between theory (such as the question: "How do we prepare young people to become participating democratic adult citizens?") and practice (such as the answer: "By ensuring that they experience democracy in action in every aspect of school life at every level"). Thus it begins with a few definitions; describes how the journey towards democracy tends to take shape; helps readers to estimate how far along the journey their school has so far travelled; and gives practical advice and ideas on how either to start the journey or to travel further on it, with appropriate evaluation of the progress that has been made.

Who is it for?

No democracy is perfect; no school is perfect; and no school is perfectly democratic! Much of this manual is aimed at school leaders, the term generally given nowadays to those professionals at the senior end of management who have the power and responsibility to determine to a large degree the way in which the school operates. The authors of the main part of the guide make no apology for this! We are both serving heads, though we both recognise that we are far from being the only people in our schools with the power and authority described above. But the first person in a school who is likely to read this (before passing it on, we hope!) is the head and, without the active support and work of the head, democracy is unlikely to take root and grow: so we have used the word "head" as being interchangeable with "leader", and hope we will be forgiven for our deliberately loose terminology.

But in a democracy there are other stakeholders. This manual can be used with equal success by the other people who have an interest in the success of the school. The students – children and young people aged (in the view of this manual) from four (or below) to 20 (and beyond), and whether in formal school, in university, in technical or vocational training in college or in the workplace – are the people who have the paramount interest *both* in the education that is provided for them *and* in the manner in which it is provided. We cannot stress too strongly that democratic

participation is not something that can only be undertaken by children of a certain (perhaps secondary phase) age: on the contrary, it is best learnt in stages from the very beginning of schooling, where the youngest children readily assimilate and live the values and practices of democracy.

Parents and the wider community have an interest in both inputs and outcomes. And teachers, trainers and other workers, in schools and elsewhere, have both a right and a responsibility to have a voice in the education that is taking place there. Therefore school leaders have to establish and nurture a wide range of partnerships. This guide has something for all the partners and stakeholders in the process of educating the young.

Why?

Why should educational leaders and stakeholders want to work through this guide and evaluate or plan their path to a more democratic approach? The following two chapters will help to answer that question. In short, though, it is in their interest to do so. A democratically structured and functioning school will not only promote EDC and prepare its students to take their place in society as engaged democratic citizens: it will also become a happier, more creative and more effective institution. The value that is added is immense: the research evidence of this is growing in volume all the time. So this manual does not simply describe a mission to do something morally right: starting down the democratic path is also a pragmatic step towards making schooling a more pleasant and more productive process.

How the tool works

In many ways we hope that the manual will take the form of a professional discourse with you, the reader. You are invited throughout to compare some measures of the varying extent of democratic practice that may be identified in the way a school runs with the state of affairs in your school. This is the first step of a process. You start by evaluating where you and your school are now and end by planning the steps to take it forward democratically – with, we hope, some advice and encouragement to help you on the way. So we will describe situations or indicators that we think are common, inviting you to compare our view with your experience. We hope that is a helpful way to work together – as colleagues.

Following that method, then, we will first take you through two brief chapters explaining what we mean by the term "democratic school governance" and how we see the benefits it brings to institutions.

Then we go straight to the heart of the manual. Chapter 4 outlines what we see as four Key Areas of school governance. We hope that you will then want to perform the same kind of analysis on other issues that are important to you, by using the planning grid in Appendix I – but not, we beg, until you have read the rest of the guide first!

Examining how a school operates in relation to these Key Areas illustrates the extent to which it is contributing to – or detracting from – EDC. This is measured by identifying four stages of democratic development that might be discernible in a school, from Stage 1 where there is no trace of democratic activity (old-authoritarian) to quite a highly advanced form of democratic living (Stage 4).

Chapter 5 unpacks these ideas, exploring the values that underlie such modes of operation and the forms of behaviour that stem from them. Chapter 6 furnishes what we hope is a wealth of ideas and strategies for making the steps between the stages described in the preceding chapters.

Chapter 7 deals with frequently asked questions (FAQs) about developing democratic practice in schools: such questions often grow out of natural and widespread anxieties about letting go of power, and we hope that such fears will be dispelled, or allayed, in this chapter.

The following chapter provides more examples of good practice from around Europe. Chapter 9 then gives the positive alternative to fears and anxieties, a consideration of some common traits and patterns likely to be found in a school that has made significant strides down the democratic

path: as examples of good practice these may give readers ideas for strategies that they can try in their own schools.

Appendix I is the blank grid designed to allow you to conduct your own analysis, adopting the approach described in the manual. Finally, Appendix II, by Delphine Liégeois, a consultant to the Council of Europe, provides an overview of the EDC background to educational policies in Europe and in the work of the Council of Europe.

We hope that you will find this guide interesting and enjoyable – and above all something that is both useful and usable.

About the writers

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2. What is democratic school governance?

School leaders have to take into account many powerful factors in their operational and strategic work: legislation, curriculum, local authorities, parents, pupils, financial resources, socio-economic environment, competition, etc. Many of these factors are constantly changing and beyond the school leader's control. Good management is not enough. A school leader today works "in more or less decentralised systems based on complex interplay of many autonomous partners".[1] The term "school governance" is used throughout this manual as a wide definition of school leadership, including both instrumental and ideological aspects. "Democratic" indicates that school governance is based on human rights values, empowerment and involvement of students, staff and stakeholders in all important decisions in the school.

> Halász identifies the difference between "governance" and "management" in schools: it is important to stress the strongly interlinked but very different meanings of these two terms. While the word "governance" is used to stress the openness of schools and educational systems, the term "management" is used rather in order to underline the technical and instrumental dimensions of governing. We govern those things or beings the behaviour of which cannot be predicted totally (because of, for instance, the existence of autonomous units capable of asserting their interests and to negotiate alternative solutions). We manage things or beings, the behaviour of which is easier to predict. When we govern, we negotiate, persuade, bargain, apply pressure, etc., because we do not have full control of those we govern. When we manage, we tend to instruct and order because we think we have strong and legitimate power to do so. When we speak about educational systems, we prefer using the term "governance". When speaking about schools as organisational units, we more often use the term "management". However, as schools are becoming more and more open institutions, rooted in specific local social and economic settings, and characterised by a complex array of different needs and interests, we tend to resort, also at this level, to using the term "governance".

Since so many factors cannot be controlled by executive powers alone, an open and democratic approach is the only way to a successful and sustainable leadership in a modern school. However, democratic school governance is not merely a means of survival for the school head; there are other, far more important reasons.

Ethical reasons

There is universal agreement in theory on democratic values: "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights."[2] "The child who is capable of forming his or her views [has] the right to express those views [and] the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion."[3] Practically every country and even every school has written policies of this kind. But if we really want to implement democratic values in society, we need to practise them in our daily work. This is particularly important for leaders of all kinds of organisations, but particularly of schools.

Political reasons

A genuine striving for democracy in a country must be evident and practised from an early age. There is a clear risk in old democracies that young people take democracy for granted and therefore lose interest in participating. Where the history of democracy is shorter and the foundations are shakier, any setback might result in withdrawals of rights. But if you have learnt

1. Halász, Gabor: Governing schools and education systems in the era of diversity: A paper prepared for the 21st Session of the Standing Conference of European Ministers of Education on "Intercultural education". Budapest 2003.
2. Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948.
3. The Convention on the Rights of the Child, Articles 12-14, UN 1989.

from practical experience to overcome at least some of the usual problems in democratic decision-making, your faith in democracy will probably be strengthened, and you will be more willing to participate actively in politics, locally and, perhaps, nationally.

Rapidly changing society

The flood of information is impossible to stop or even control. We cannot protect our children from it. On the other hand, it makes today's young people the most well-informed generation so far. So how can we teach the young to select and judge, when we are not there to decide what information is good or bad for them? Instead of futile attempts at censorship or restrictions, we have to teach them critical and self-governed thinking.

Today there is a shift in values from the group to the individual, a tendency to see oneself more as a customer than a citizen in the welfare society. When parents are dissatisfied in some way with the local school their child is attending, they do not take political action, contact the school board or become active in the parents' association. Instead, a more likely outcome is a feeling of alienation from school, withdrawal from real engagement in their child's education or even parental connivance in the child's non-attendance at school. In communities or societies where it is possible, parents may otherwise move their child to another school. All these outcomes have powerful negative effects on the child's education, on the school, or on both. To enhance interest in active citizenship, therefore, we have to prove to our children throughout their formative years that taking part in common decisions is worth the effort – and quite fun, too.

Society is changing, rapidly and constantly. Among the things we have to cope with at the beginning of the 21st century, some are important to mention here. Enterprises and people move from one part of the world to another, changing economic, demographic and cultural structures. Technical innovations offer threats and opportunities. A state or a local community is exposed to and has to interact with global forces beyond democratic control. On the other hand, we must acknowledge all the positive effects globalisation has had on our daily lives, see diversity and change as opportunities and give our children the right education for this kind of world.

3. What are the benefits of democratic governance?

Democratic school governance is good for your school because it...

1. ... improves discipline

The first objection to involving stakeholders such as pupils in the decision making is usually about discipline. If pupils cannot follow strict and simple rules with clear sanctions if you break them, how can we expect them to make mature and responsible decisions on their own? Experience and research show, however, that pupils given trust become more responsible. Rules are necessary, but ruling based on trust is far more sustainable than ruling by threats. And it works better when nobody is watching.

2. ... enhances learning

Learning is an individual thing. The teacher may have an idea about how to learn, but learning styles differ from person to person. In a democratic environment, learners are given greater freedom to choose how to work and also, to some extent at least, what to learn. Problems with underachievement and lack of motivation are often reduced if the student is allowed greater freedom to chose what and how to study and, when possible, how to be assessed.

Gustav Trolen teaches a history course at Tullinge gymnasium, an upper secondary school in Sweden. During the course, there will be three examinations. For each examination, the student can choose to write a paper, take a traditional test with questions to answer, or do an oral examination. There is only one restriction: not all three examinations are allowed to be of the same type. At least one must differ from the others. This freedom of choice may not seem so great, but it makes the students more confident and helps to reduce their nervousness.

3. ... reduces conflict

When groups of people spend much time together over a relatively long period of time, there is always a risk of conflict. Difference and lack of understanding within a school society can easily give rise to intolerance, discrimination, bullying, even violence. In an authoritarian environment where rank or social position is more important than, say, individual rights, people can feel it necessary for their survival to form alliances for protection or personal favours. This is a perfect breeding ground for discrimination and bullying. If you manage to implement a sense of mutual respect, you will probably make the school yard a nicer and safer place.

4. ... makes the school more competitive

Decentralisation of school governance and competition between schools are fairly new phenomena in many European countries. Especially in urban areas, competition can be tough.

Modern European citizens are well informed, often well educated, and take civil rights for granted. They expect society to respect the wishes and demands they have for their children and those of the children themselves. Children are no longer brought up to obey authority unquestioningly. Schools must adapt to these views. If parents get the impression that their child is not treated with due respect, they are likely to become hostile to the school – or, where it is possible to do so, choose another.

5. ... secures the future existence of sustainable democracies

Children don't do as we tell them to do; they do as we do. It is no use talking about democracy in our schools if we don't practise it. And it is not enough to let pupils decide only about simple

things like the colour of the classroom walls when they need repainting. They must be given influence, and thus learn the responsibility of true participation, in matters that are central to their learning and their daily life in the school: teaching methods, school policies, term planning, budget issues, and recruitment of new staff, to name a few. This is certainly not done overnight, and there are no standard methods suitable for all, but we are convinced that this is the best way to carry out Education for Democratic Citizenship in Europe.

In the following chapters we will describe in more detail the benefits of democratic school governance and how you can obtain these benefits – and others, such as a nicer working environment for everybody in your school – without having to fear ending up in chaos and disorder.

4. Key Areas for democratic school governance: a first analysis

How does a school leader assess where his/her school stands in relation to democratic governance? To what extent does the way in which the school is led, managed, and run promote Education for Democratic Citizenship (EDC)? Is it possible to judge how far down the path of democracy the school has gone? Or how far there is still to travel?

One way in which such a measurement can be made is by taking an aspect of the school and seeing how it functions in that area in relation to the Council of Europe's Three Principles for EDC (see Appendix II). They are:

- rights and responsibilities
- active participation
- valuing diversity.

Clearly some areas of activity, and the way in which the school goes about them, have more significance than others with regard to assessing the extent to which the school's governance is democratic; or is moving down the path towards democracy; or is purely authoritarian. We have identified four such Key Areas:

- governance, leadership and public accountability
- value-centred education
- co-operation, communication and involvement: competitiveness and school self-determination
- student discipline.

Student council at Wolverhampton Grammar School, Wolverhampton, UK

Naturally schools will find other areas that are of equal or greater importance to them: these four were chosen because they are examples that give broad coverage. The way in which a school is governed, led, holds itself and is held accountable is inevitably a key indicator of the extent to which its operation is democratic. Similarly, if we accept that education is (or should be) value-driven, then those values must be deeply rooted in the values of democracy if the school is truly to promote EDC: hence Key Area 2.

The third Key Area may appear a curious amalgam of themes, but there are synergies between them: they are all connected. "Co-operation and communication" relate to the way in which the school operates within and reacts to its setting, to the community it serves, but equally to the students for whom it exists and to their parents who are also stakeholders. "Co-operation and

communication" also have a lot to do with the extent to which the school is an active and willing partner with other organisations: for example, is the local business community simply something to be approached for money or is the school seeking to generate a genuinely reciprocal, two-way relationship with it to the benefit of both? "Competitiveness and school self-determination" are combined within that same Key Area because the drive towards school improvement across the whole of Europe (which is combined in many countries with a government-created climate of competition between schools) can, if not carefully managed, act powerfully against democratic co-operation and communication. Thus a judgement in this area is likely to involve assessing the extent to which the school is able to balance and manage the tensions between co-operation and competition. Democracy, of course, frequently involves us in coming to terms with precisely those kinds of contradictions rather than hiding them or allowing them to develop into human conflict.

As the fourth Key Area we have chosen "student discipline" because it (or, rather, indiscipline) is a matter of concern in so many schools, indeed in whole school systems, in Europe. There is also a popular misconception, a fire whose flames are too often fanned by press and TV, that school democracy is incompatible with good discipline. It is also a single issue, whereas the other three Key Areas are composites of themes: so this is perhaps the simplest to use as an example when identifying your own Key Areas and analysing them by means of this grid method.

It would be simplistic to pretend that schools are either entirely democratic with regard to any of these Key Areas – let alone any others that schools will identify for themselves – or entirely inimical to democratic governance. Democracy is often described as a journey, and any school trying to plot its position along that journey will inevitably find that in some areas it has travelled a long way while in others it has barely started. This is quite natural and should not be a cause for despair! On the contrary, we should take heart from the successes and find renewed determination to tackle the areas that have not yet moved far enough.

This analysis of each of the four Key Areas in relation to the Three Principles for EDC is done in the form of a grid. In measuring each of our four Key Areas against the Three Principles for EDC we have tried to identify four stages along the path to democracy and to describe simple characteristics of each, illustrating them with comments that might typically be heard in a school in that position.

The first step in every case describes a school which has not started down the democratic path to any extent, espousing instead old authoritarian values.

Stage 4 clearly describes a school where democratic values and practice permeate every aspect of the school's life. Would that make a Stage 4 school a "good school"? We believe it would. There would be fairly universal agreement that the purpose of schools in a democracy is to enable children to maximise their potential: in academic terms; in the development of life skills; in their ability to play a full part in democratic society. However high the academic achievement of a school, if it failed its students in the other two contexts we could not call it a good school.

It is perhaps significant that the component boxes of the later grids merge as they progress towards Stage 4. As we carried out our analysis we found that, the further down the democratic path the school goes, the more consistent become its style and modes of operation across its areas of activity – so in our grid the boxes merge. We should perhaps not be surprised by this.

The descriptors used in the grids are very much in shorthand. Once you have worked through the four grids and related them to your own experience in your school, you'll need to move on to the next chapter, which analyses much more fully the values and behaviours that underlie and characterise each of the stages in each of the four Key Areas in relation to the Three Principles.

Key Area 1	Governance, leadership, management and public accountability				
	Rights and responsibilities			Active participation	Valuing diversity
EDC interpretation of Key Area: general descriptors	(a) Leadership is responsible to government (local or national) or local school board – "higher authority" – but recognises and protects the primary duty to stakeholders.	(b) Leadership shares power with stakeholders.	(c) Management and day-to-day issues/routines recognise the rights of those affected by decisions: execution of decisions respects ethical dimension and human dignity.	Leadership recognises and promotes shared ownership and responsibility of all stakeholders.	Leadership values and promotes diversity.
Stage 1 characteristics *Characteristic comment*	Leadership sees itself as responsible/ accountable only to higher authorities (bureaucrat or strong man). *"I am responsible."*	Authoritarian without consultation. *"I know best!"*	Responsibilities delegated as jobs to be done with no freedom of action. *"Get on with your job!"*	Leadership takes sole responsibility – heroic shouldering of the burden. *"I am responsible for you."*	Leadership recognises diversity but does not value it. *"Whoever you may be outside this school, here you are just a student."*
Stage 2 characteristics *Characteristic comment*	Leadership has some awareness of stakeholders and of possible negative effects on stakeholders. *"I take the responsibility, even if it is tough."*	Leadership informs others before applying the decision. *"Open door – closed mind!"*	Some freedom of action is allowed, but tightly controlled. Smooth running of the institution is the aim. *"Do it your way – but check with me first."*	Rhetorical responsibility without action – heroic carrying of burden with a touch of martyrdom. *"Why don't you take responsibility?"*	Leadership shows some awareness of gender and diversity but takes no real action to value them. *"I might expect a girl to do that, but not a big boy like you!"*
Stage 3 characteristics *Characteristic comment*	Leadership sees the needs of stakeholders as being of similar importance as those of the higher authority and makes alliances with various pressure groups. *"I use my autonomy and win friends to meet the needs of stakeholders."*	Incidental/informal consultation, where information is gathered and delivered randomly. *"Open door – open mind!"*	Those with responsibility are given complete freedom of action, but only in largely peripheral areas: smooth running of core activity is still the prime aim. *"I'll leave you to get on with it."*	Leadership is genuinely working towards shared responsibility – which is probably shared only in the "easy" areas (festivals, extra-curricular activities, etc.). *"We like sharing responsibility for the common interest."*	Awareness of diversity; action in easier cases (e.g. school publications) demonstrates diversity; non-discriminating rules exist; there is recognition of religious diversity; admission policy is based on inclusion; special needs are catered for, and equal opportunities promoted irrespective of background or gender. But teaching and curricula take little account of diversity. *"We're proud that ours is an inclusive school. Now let's get on with the lessons."*
Stage 4 characteristics *Characteristic comment*	Leadership works to build consensus/confidence/trust between the various levels, gives formal recognition of the interests of the stakeholders and uses own experience to influence political decisions. *"What can we do to make the best of this (imposed) situation?"*	Both formal and informal consultation produces systemic and structured information flow. *"We all take responsibility for decision-making."*	Decisions are taken at appropriate levels ("subsidiarity") with full freedom of action. But interests, rights and dignity of students/ stakeholders take precedence over "smooth running". Information flow is good, and there is an expectation of full, structured consultation. If systemic change is needed for implementation, this is reported upwards and change negotiated/implemented. *"We make it work together."*	Sharing of responsibilities even in difficult areas (budget, curriculum, strategic planning, school based teacher training, self improvement, evaluation, teaching, etc.). *"It is our school."* *"We are in this together."*	Leadership ensures that diversity is seen and used as an asset/added value of school governance. Diversity gives students extra/additional competence and makes the school attractive/better (higher status). Positive action is taken to allow full access and participation of vulnerable groups. *"Diversity is one of the strengths of our school."*

Key Area 2	Value-centred education					
	Rights and responsibilities	**Active participation**		**Valuing diversity**		
EDC interpretation of Key Area: general descriptors	**EDC/HRE principles are expressed in the curriculum.**	**(a) Students have some right to decide what to learn.**	**(b) Different learning styles are taken into account.**	**(a) The curriculum is appropriate for all learners.**	**(b) School books must be unbiased.**	**(c) Education is equally accessible to all.**
Stage 1	The school curriculum does not express EDC/HRE values.	Subject matter is decided in detail by authorities.	Teaching methods are chosen by teachers. *"Teachers perform much better when they use their own methods."*	The curriculum aims at conformity.	School books hold up the dominating group/view as the norm and minority values as deviations.	Girls are not encouraged to follow traditionally "male" subjects.
Characteristic comment	*"Our task is to teach children to read and write. The rest is up to the parents."*	*"Choosing topics is best done by experts."*		*"What our country (school) needs is order, not chaos."*	*"When in Rome, you must learn to do like the Romans."*	*"Girls are better suited to some subjects than others."*
Stage 2	EDC/HR values are mentioned in the curriculum, but not in imperative terms.	Students are given opportunity to express their opinions.	Students are given some options in how to work, decided by the teacher. *"We always let the students decide in which order they want to do the exercises."*	Special needs are acknowledged. A different cultural background is seen as a handicap that can be cured. Some measures are taken to meet diversity.	Biased school books may be used, but inappropriate parts are ignored.	Statements are made about welcoming applications from minority groups, but no affirming action is taken to promote inclusion. *"We do our best. If they don't like it here, I suggest they choose another school."*
Characteristic comment	*"This part of the curriculum is nice. It's like poetry."*	*"It's easier to maintain order if you let the students express their opinions."*		*"I haven't seen any discrimination in my school."*	*"We cannot afford new books just because they might upset one or two. I have to decide other priorities."*	
Stage 3	EDC/HR values are expressed in the first paragraph of the curriculum as fundamental in all education. Local school policies stress the importance of respect for human rights.	Teachers are encouraged to involve students in the teaching process. Teachers and students plan together. There is room for individual choices.		The curriculum is appropriate for all learners.	Biased school books are not allowed.	The achievement and unique cultural features of minorities are identified and celebrated. Gender issues are actively pursued.
Characteristic comment	*"We believe very strongly in respect for everyone involved in this school."*	*"Helping the students to choose their own topics is the best way to motivate them."*	*"Students perform much better when they use their own methods."*	*"When they leave this multi-cultural school, our students will have unique qualifications, very useful in the future."*	*"I'll contact the editor today. We want our money back."*	*"Why do boys think their sport is more important?"*
Stage 4	EDC/HR values are expressed not just in printed curricula but as a fundamental and central element of the operation of school life. The school ethos is founded in, and breathes, equality and respect for human rights: school leaders "walk the talk" of democracy and respect.	Students are recognised as experts on their own learning.		School leaders show in action and words a respectful and open attitude to diversity.	Where unbiased texts are not available, the school develops its own materials.	Learning to deal with diversity is seen as a valuable extra competence – for all students and teachers.
Characteristic comment	*"If somebody is treated disrespectfully in my school, I drop whatever I'm doing and intervene at once."*	*"The learners are the experts on their learning – and can teach us teachers a lot too."*		*"How can we learn from each other and grow together?"*	*"Do-it-yourself is better than bad books." "Democracy is capable of producing its own material."*	*"Now we are beginning to understand what we mean by inclusion and diversity."*

Key Area 3	Co-operation, communication and involvement: competitiveness and school self-determination							
EDC principle	**Rights and responsibilities**			**Active participation**			**Valuing diversity**	
EDC interpretation of Key Area: general descriptors	(a) School actively seeks self-improvement and (where competition is national policy) a competitive edge – but always for the sake of better outcomes for students and other partners/stakeholders, not for status, wealth or power.	(b) School plays an active role in contributing to the well-being of its local community: and opens up to outside organisations to tackle problems, always putting students' rights and needs first.	(c) Parents and families are active partners with students and school and there is full recognition by all parties of their rights and responsibilities with regard to the children's education.	(a) Parents and families are active partners with students and school in the education of their children: there is a constant two-way flow of information between home and school, between school and other organisations.	(b) School is actively involved in the life of its community: organisations (NGOs and businesses) are welcomed as partners in development of curricula and learning activities – always putting students' needs first.	(c) In its drive for self-improvement (even in a competitive climate) school develops strategies but always shares good professional practice with other institutions.	(a) School strives to ensure that there is full communication with involvement of hard-to-reach or minority groups.	(b) The drive to self-improvement and raising standards is not permitted to exclude certain groups which might be felt to impede progress.
Stage 1 characteristics	School must prove itself to be better than all the rest, and students must thus prove themselves to the school.	Leadership concentrates purely on the interests of the school and its smooth running which must be protected above all.	School discourages parental involvement or consultation: the institution is the expert.	School keeps parents informed about its own agenda.	"Outsiders" are discouraged from involvement in school.	Other institutions are seen as competition: good practice is kept within school.	It is not seen as the school's role to promote gender equality: it is up to the girls to make the effort.	Minority or disadvantaged groups are seen as being likely to lower standards – and are thus seen as a threat.
Characteristic comment	*"This is the best school in the area/region: you must measure up."*	*"School comes first."*	*"School knows best."*	*"We tell parents what they need to know."*	*"We don't need other people interfering: we're the experts."*	*"We must keep ahead of the rest: so don't tell them what we're doing."*	*"If girls think they are being unfairly treated they should speak up."*	*"They drag down the ones who are prepared to work hard."*
Stage 2 characteristics	School wants its students to excel above all in order to raise its own status.	There is some recognition that the school is part of a larger community – but little or no engagement with it.	School knows it is there for its students and to some extent their parents, but does not see them as in any sense partners.	Students and parents are acknowledged as stakeholders – but not as participants, rather as subjects of the school's omniscience.	School will engage with partner organisations – but is suspicious of them and only really seeks material support.	School is prepared to publicise good practice, but in search of status, not for the sake of sharing expertise.	School is passive with regard to hard-to-reach or minority groups: it sees it as their responsibility to become involved if they wish to.	School is suspicious of "non-standard" students, still seeing them as possible (likely?) problems to be contained.
Characteristic comment	*"We want you to do very well: don't let the school down."*	*"It's good to have the community using our sports facilities."*	*"We make it very clear what we expect from students – and their parents."*	*"We keep parents informed: and they can always call us."*	*"We don't need expertise from business, but we like the money."*	*"Getting publicity for our innovations and achievements helps our reputation."*	*"We can't make them get involved: they just don't."*	*"They're fine as long as they come to terms with what we expect."*
Stage 3 characteristics	There is pressure on teachers and students to achieve high standards, partly for students' sake but with an eye to the competition too.	School is involved in and supports community activities, but does not involve the community in its internal operations.	There is regular contact with students' parents and families; school is welcoming and invites their views.	There is a powerful flow of information from school, and parents are welcome to express their views. School links with organisations that are welcome guests, especially as experts to lecture to or advise students.		School readily shares its good practice with other schools and professionals.	School makes significant efforts to reach out to, and recruit students and teachers from, minorities and hard-to-reach groups, and to assimilate them into the school culture and to succeed.	

<table>
<tr><td>Key Area 3</td><td colspan="6">Co-operation, communication and involvement: competitiveness and school self-determination</td></tr>
<tr><td>EDC principle</td><td colspan="3">Rights and responsibilities</td><td colspan="2">Active participation</td><td>Valuing diversity</td></tr>
<tr><td>Characteristic comment</td><td>“We need you to do well – for yourself and for the school.”</td><td>“It’s good to play our part in the community.”</td><td>“We want to hear what you’ve got to say.”</td><td>“We welcome parents and many other visitors to school on a regular basis.”</td><td>“We’re always happy to share what we do well.”</td><td>“We’re proud of the way we encourage and support diversity.”</td></tr>
<tr><td>Stage 4 characteristics</td><td>Excellence is for the students: realistically, that benefits the school and community too.</td><td colspan="2">All stakeholders and the community itself are seen as contributing to and benefiting from school.</td><td colspan="3">School sees all stakeholders and partners as valuable contributors as well and potential recipients of benefits: more than a partnership, this is real democratic engagement.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Characteristic comment</td><td>“We want you to excel for your sake: it won’t hurt us either!”</td><td colspan="5">“We’re all working together for the good of all.”</td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><td>Key Area 4</td><td colspan="3">Student discipline</td></tr>
<tr><td>EDC principle</td><td>Rights and responsibilities</td><td>Active participation</td><td>Valuing diversity</td></tr>
<tr><td>EDC interpretation of Key Area: general descriptors</td><td>The rights and responsibilities of democratic citizens are reflected in the rights accorded to – and equally in the responsibilities expected from – students in school.</td><td>Students agree and negotiate rules and take responsibility for their implementation and observance – both through authority structures (e.g. a prefect system) and as “good citizens”.</td><td>The different needs and expectations of students from minorities are understood and are part of a negotiated and agreed discipline structure that involves and applies to all.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Stage 1 characteristics</td><td colspan="2">School’s management sets and enforces the rules – even when students clearly resent or resist them.</td><td rowspan="2">Rules are rules, and no allowance is made for different cultures, backgrounds or needs.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Characteristic comment</td><td>“We’ll tell you what to do – and you will do it, or else!”</td><td>“Just do as you’re told.”</td></tr>
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<tr><td>Characteristic comment</td><td>“We’ll hear what you say: but you know the school knows best. You must behave.”</td><td>“Why can’t you be more responsible?”</td></tr>
<tr><td>Stage 3 characteristics</td><td>Though there is a limit to the extent of concessions available, many rules are negotiated and agreed with the student body.</td><td>... and many students co-operate in and even help to enforce the code of behaviour.</td><td rowspan="2">Minorities are involved in the consultation that is available.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Characteristic comment</td><td colspan="2">“We can talk about this: but there is a bottom line as to what is expected – or you’re likely to disappoint us.”</td></tr>
<tr><td>Stage 4 characteristics</td><td colspan="3">The school’s entire behaviour code and rules are devised through consultation and negotiation with the student body, ensuring that all minorities are fully involved: and students play their part either/both as “good citizens” or/and as authority figures (prefects/monitors) in implementing them and seeing that they are enforced.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Characteristic comment</td><td colspan="3">“We will bring everyone on board in planning, negotiating and implementing a code of behaviour that ensures safety, good order and respect for all.”</td></tr>
</table>

5. Where do I stand? Values and behaviours

Whatever values or principles might be expressed in legislation or policy documents, the head's behaviour is what really counts. When you visit a school for the first time, you can often find indications of the level of democratic governance quite easily: the tone in the messages on the notice boards; the way you are treated by pupils and staff you happen to meet; the state of walls and furniture; the social intercourse in the school yard and outside classrooms; and many other details. To what degree school heads, students and staff share responsibility for the school is reflected in behaviour on all levels.

This chapter gives examples on how values, and especially EDC values, affect the governance and daily life of schools. We will look at the Key Areas described in the previous chapter.

5.1 Governance, leadership, management and public accountability

Stage 1

Leadership sees itself as responsible/accountable only to higher authorities (bureaucrat or strong man).	Authoritarian without consultation.	Responsibilities delegated as jobs to be done with no freedom of action.	Leadership takes sole responsibility – heroic shouldering of the burden.	Leadership recognises diversity but does not value it.

State legislation, local school boards, trade unions, pupils and parents, local communities – all make demands of school leadership, frequently conflicting. What does the school leader give priority to when demands are incompatible?

The school leader is first and foremost responsible to higher authorities. At school, the leader is seen as a representative for the school board and/or the state and is respected because of position and rank.

Sharing power is out of the question at this stage. It is not even regarded as necessary to consult students or staff before making decisions, especially not if the regulations are clear and easy to interpret. If the school leader uses a suggestion from those under him/her, it will be presented as his/her own.

Some routine matters may be delegated, provided there are detailed instructions to follow. Control is important.

Responsibility and leadership cannot be shared. The leader takes full responsibility for all activities and all decisions at the school. She/he is also prepared to take the full blame for failures. The school is always represented by its leader.

Diversity is one of the problems in modern society. It is important to deal with persons and problems according to existing rules and regulations, without distinction.

Characteristic comments:

"I'm the boss!"
"I know best."
"It might be easier to do the job the way you suggest, but the rules are very clear on this point."
"I see myself as the personification of everything this school stands for."

Stage 2

Leadership has some awareness of stakeholders and of possible negative effects on stakeholders.	Leadership informs others before applying the decision.	Some freedom of action is allowed, but tightly controlled. Smooth running of the institution is the aim.	Rhetorical responsibility without action – heroic carrying of burden with a touch of martyrdom.	Leadership shows some awareness of diversity but takes no real action to value it.

Authoritarian leadership as in Stage 1 is seen less and less in modern Europe. At Stage 2, it is still very important to be loyal to higher levels of authority, but some vague attempts to mitigate the effects of general regulations on vulnerable individuals can be seen, even if you will never hear the head utter a negative comment on any new directive from higher authorities. The leader senses the advantages of good relationships with stakeholders and sees information as a way of communicating. But it is mainly one-way communication, and the purpose is to create some acceptance for decisions by the head or other instances.

At this stage the head finds it too risky to share responsibility since stakeholders show so many signs of irresponsible behaviour! Criticism is seen more as a disturbance of well-functioning routines than as a starting-point for improvement, so it seems safer to put some effort into strengthening people's loyalty to the system.

Thus it is important to give an impression of tolerance. At the same time, diversity is seen as a deviation from the norm: the aim in dealing with it is a higher degree of conformity.

Characteristic comments:

"This has already been decided. Next question?"
"I cannot understand why they don't like this new procedure. I described it in detail at our last staff meeting."
"You don't seem to agree. Perhaps I did not express myself clearly enough."

Stage 3

Here some important steps have been taken to introduce democratic governance:

Leadership sees the needs of stakeholders as being of similar importance as those of the higher authority and makes alliances with various pressure groups.	Those with responsibility are given complete freedom of action, but only in largely peripheral areas: smooth running of core activity is still the prime aim.	Leadership is genuinely working towards shared responsibility – which is probably shared only in the 'easy' areas (festivals, extra-curricular activities etc.).	Awareness of diversity; action in easier cases (e.g. school publications) demonstrates diversity; non-discriminating rules exist; there is recognition of religious diversity; admission policy is based on inclusion; special needs are catered for, and equal opportunities promoted irrespective of background. But teaching and curricula take little account of diversity.

Your commitment is first and foremost to core values such as human rights. The leadership focuses on goals, not primarily on regulations. Important decisions are taken only after consultations with those affected by them. As far as possible, decisions are based on consensus. School leadership and staff show, in words and action, that students' opinions are taken into account. The importance of real influence for stakeholders on central questions is evident in all policy documents. Trust is a key word. Rules and routines are expressed in terms of responsibilities rather than prohibitions.

The leaders of the school also find it essential to convince students about the intrinsic value of democracy. One way to do this is to give students authority to decide, at least in easier areas. The school leader is still careful not to put too much power in the hands of students and staff.

Respect for diversity is taken for granted. Diversity is accepted and various measures for better understanding and compensation are taken.

Characteristic comments:

"Before renovating the school yard, we must consult the children. They are the experts here."
"Representatives from the school council will present a proposal for new school regulations at our next staff meeting. They are really keen on hearing our opinion."

Taking your school to Stage 3 is not too risky or difficult, provided your support for everybody's right to participate is based on a genuine, profound belief in democratic values and that you see children as subjects, worthy of respect, and not as empty containers to fill with useful competencies (or even as lovable objects in our possession to be shaped according to our will, not

theirs: this over-protective approach is one of the more seductive ways of undermining the empowerment of children because it is rooted in apparent kindness and care).

Stage 4

Leadership works to build consensus/confidence/trust between the various levels, gives formal recognition of the interests of the stakeholders and uses own experience to influence political decisions.	Both formal and informal consultation produces systemic and structured information flow.	Sharing of responsibilities even in difficult areas (budget, curriculum, strategic planning, school-based teacher training, self-improvement, evaluation, teaching etc.).	Leadership ensures that diversity is seen and used as an asset/added value of school governance. Diversity gives students extra/additional competence and makes the school attractive/better (higher status). Positive action is taken to allow full access and participation of vulnerable groups.

When you have taken your school to Stage 3, you will soon find out that some of the changes you made were largely cosmetic, even if the job satisfaction is higher among staff and students and vandalism has been reduced. What you have to do now is to work systematically with values such as mutual respect, rights and responsibilities and, above all, trust.

The one element that perhaps is most desperately needed to reach the objective of the democratic school is trust. Our education systems were and still are characterised by distrust:

- distrust of pupils' ability to develop self-responsibility for their own learning;
- distrust of teachers' ability to achieve good results in open learning situations characterised by more curricular freedom and autonomy;
- distrust of schools' ability to create a democratic environment through better autonomy; and
- distrust of all learning institutions not regulated through curricular prescriptions and rules.

Reforming and reinventing the school for its function as a learning community can only be attempted successfully if trust is established as a principle in education systems and becomes a visible signal from education policy makers to schools and to education practitioners.

A great portion of optimism and a positive view of our future are probably needed as well. Your work must be process-orientated, with a long-term perspective. The perspective is also widened in another sense: as a school leader, you see yourself as an important factor in society, not just in your school.

In Stage 4 the school is seen as an important bearer of democratic values. It is an open school, with regular communication with higher authorities to give them good grounds for future decisions. In the school, major changes in any field are seldom carried out against the will of the majority. Compromise, test periods and reconsiderations are normal procedures. Rules and regulations are set up by those affected by them. The responsibility of the leadership is to contribute with professional knowledge and, like everybody else, with personal opinions and experience. Authority for the leadership is based on professional and personal competencies, not rank.

It is considered important to value all the competencies available in the organisation and among interested parties in the surrounding society.

It is seen as an extra merit for students and staff to take active part in the governance of the school. Student members in school councils or school boards are given special training in meeting procedures. They also get a budget of their own.

Leadership values and promotes diversity, for ideological and strategic reasons. An international atmosphere in the school gives the students an added competence that cannot be had in more isolated, homogeneous surroundings.

Characteristic comments:

"School must be a place where you experience all the good sides of democracy. We want to create active citizens who act in a constructive way instead of just complaining."
"The students are the best experts on their own learning."
"Young people are not much different from adults, but they are younger, so they can see things from another point of view."

5.2 Value-centred education

The general purpose of our schools is not only to transfer knowledge from one generation to the next; most national curricula express a set of values essential for the society in question.

The Swedish Education Act is a typical example: the national school system should "provide the pupils with knowledge and, in co-operation with the homes, promote their harmonious development into responsible human beings and members of the community." So how evident are democratic principles and human rights values in our daily work in our schools? The behaviour of school leaders and staff reveal more about the dominating values than the official steering documents.

Stage 1

The school curriculum does not stress EDC/HRE values.	Subject matter is decided in detail by authorities.	Teaching methods are chosen by teachers.	The curriculum aims at conformity.	School books hold up the dominating group/view as the norm and minority values as deviations.	Girls are not encouraged to follow traditionally "male" subjects.

In Stage 1, you see the transfer of knowledge and skills like reading and writing as the dominating task of the school. "Knowledge" is to a great extent encyclopaedic. Order and stability are seen as important values inside and outside school, and a homogeneous society is desirable. A good way of conveying these values and this view on knowledge is to keep strictly to a set timetable with little room for extra-curricular activities or new subjects. Few deviations from the national curriculum are seen. Modern phenomena of great interest to young people are considered unimportant or of low academic status, as is knowledge about the local environment and history. School books should reflect society as it really is. It is not an issue for the school to try to change common values. Words like "normal" or "natural" are used when describing dominant behaviour or majority groups.

The school focuses more on teaching than learning. Pupils are not seen as capable of choosing their own learning methods, and the teacher does the term planning without consulting the pupils. Efficient teaching is important. The more homogeneous our students are, the easier it is.

Characteristic comments:

"Children are not brought up properly. They show no respect."
"Very few films and TV programmes can be called cultural activities. There is no need to bring those things up in our teaching."
"We must preserve our cultural heritage."

Stage 2

EDC/HR values are mentioned in the curriculum, but not in imperative terms.	Students are given opportunity to express their opinions.	Students are given some options in how to work, decided by the teacher.	Special needs are acknowledged. A different cultural background is seen as a handicap that can be cured. Some measures are taken to meet diversity.	Biased school books may be used, but inappropriate parts are ignored.	Statements are made about welcoming applications from minority groups, but no affirming action is taken to promote inclusion.

In Stage 2, you find a change in attitude, a certain openness to the democratic values and students' rights as expressed in official documents. When students' opinions are taken into account, it is primarily for the benefit of the teacher's plans. Students might come up with examples from real life that are applicable to what is studied at school. Students' areas of interest are used, but only when they are favourable to the teacher, and only as complements to a given plan or as a means of increasing motivation.

The teacher's choice of teaching must be respected. Teachers have professional knowledge, students don't. When students are given a freedom of choice, the main purpose is to keep them happily working with whatever topic the teacher has decided on.

It is important to level out cultural or other differences as much as possible. The purpose of measures taken is adaptation to the majority, not inclusion. Majority values are still the norm. Physical obstacles and some learning disabilities are attended to. Cultural/social/ethnic diversity is ignored as much as possible.

Stability is important and easier to maintain in a homogeneous society. New categories of students and staff may upset it, so even if applications from minority groups are accepted, no active efforts are made to broaden the basis for recruitment.

Characteristic comments:

"Before demanding their rights, students must show that they can take and use responsibility."
"Democracy is taught in social science and history lessons."
"I am the expert."
"Students from other cultures are interesting."
"Let's get the feminine view on this."

Stage 3

Stage 3 marks a real change. Here, behaviour is in much greater concordance with the values expressed in policy documents.

EDC/HR values are expressed in the first paragraph of the curriculum as fundamental in all education. Local school policies stress the importance of respect for human rights.	Teachers are encouraged to involve students in the teaching process. Teachers and students plan together. There is room for individual choices.	The curriculum is appropriate for all learners.	Biased school books are not allowed.	The achievement and unique cultural features of minorities are identified and celebrated.

To people working in a Stage 3 school, human rights values are guidelines in the daily work. Democracy is not studied as an isolated subject, but practised in many various situations. Critical and analytical thinking are important competences and can be learnt within many topics.

Teachers and school leaders are not slaves to the curriculum. The needs and interests of the students are taken into account when planning courses and lessons. Rules are open and not very detailed. Rights are always connected with responsibilities. A school with a high level of democracy and empowerment for staff and students is not a school without rules!

Leaders and staff value diversity and use it to enhance the social competence of the students and to widen their frames of reference. Instead of using words like "normal" or "natural" to describe the dominating culture, and characterising minorities as "strange", teachers take care to describe existing diversities in equal terms.

Characteristic comments:

"We are honoured that parents have entrusted us with the task of educating their children."
"We are here for our students."
"Globalisation has only just started. Our pupils will be better prepared than most for life in the future society."

Stage 4

EDC/HR values are expressed not just in printed curricula but as a fundamental and central element of the operation of school life. The school ethos is founded in, and breathes, equality and respect for human rights: school leaders "walk the talk" of democracy and respect.	Students are recognised as experts on their own learning.	School leaders show in action and words a respectful and open attitude to diversity.	Where unbiased texts are not available, the school develops its own materials.	Learning to deal with diversity is seen as a valuable extra competence – for all students and teachers.

At this stage, there is no need to specify values further. Education for democratic citizenship and human rights values permeate school life.

Every sign of disrespectful or otherwise unethical tendencies is taken seriously. Teaching procedures are evaluated systematically by the students. The students also evaluate their own work. The school invests time and resources in order to learn from and about diversity. The general outlook on the future is optimistic.

Characteristic comments:

"I can never stop wondering at how sensible and mature our students are. What a difference from when I went to school!"
"When our students leave school, they know what is best for them and those around them. They are critical and not easily manipulated."
"We are improving, but we still have a lot to learn."

5.3 Co-operation, communication and involvement: competitiveness and school self-determination

Co-operation, communication and involvement are essential values[4] if the school really wants to be able to claim that it is educating students for democratic citizenship. For democracy to function, communication must be good. Active citizens in a democracy must by definition become involved and must learn the skills of co-operation, negotiation and compromise. With their rights come responsibilities. One of those responsibilities is to be an active participant, and another must be to practise tolerance as part of valuing diversity: thus the interrelation of the Council of Europe's Three Principles for EDC is demonstrated again.

We would naturally expect to find these values visibly and tangibly present in the way a school operates. Just as active citizens are involved in the community in which they find themselves – so students might be expected to be actively involved in the community of the democratic school – a school that claims to be democratic might be expected to be actively involved in its wider community.

But there are forces that can act against such democratic involvement. It is surely right that schools are allowed considerable scope for self-determination. The earlier discussion of Key Area 1 dealt with the extent to which the school's government needs to act in the best interest of the school and the students and other stakeholders in it, sometimes mitigating the effect of outside pressures from government or society. So there may be a time when the school needs to protect itself against pressures from the community that it feels act against its best interest. That is perhaps a natural tension that is ever-present in a democracy, and is thus unremarkable. However, in many countries across Europe there is currently significant pressure on schools to operate within an educational market place. Market forces and active competition between schools are seen as powerful tools towards school improvement and the raising of standards.

4. See Appendix II for EDC values and Audigier's Key Competences.

Stage 1

School must prove itself to be better than all the rest, and students must thus prove themselves to the school.	Leadership concentrates purely on the interests of the school and its smooth running which must be protected above all.	School discourages parental involvement or consultation: the institution is the expert.	School keeps parents informed about its own agenda.	"Outsiders" are discouraged from involvement in school.	Other institutions are seen as competition: good practice is kept within school.	It is not seen as the school's role to promote gender equality: it is up to the girls to make the effort. Minority or disadvantaged groups are seen as being likely to lower standards – and are thus seen as a threat.

The pressure to compete and to out-perform its neighbours can drive a school towards a kind of insularity and protectionism that have no place, one would think, in a healthy democracy. Under that pressure the school may see the achievement of high standards by students not so much as an important goal for them as a vital target for the survival of the institution: in such circumstances the school will prefer to admit safe, predictable and hard-working children as its students and will start to see children from disadvantaged backgrounds or from other minorities as potential failures who risk damaging its successful track record in public examinations.

The same pressure may discourage the school from playing its part in sharing good practice and professional experience with other schools. If its strategies for teaching and learning are proving successful, there may be a strong motivation to keep them secret: teachers in other schools become competitors rather than colleagues. Under these conditions, relationships with any other bodies or individuals, businesses or NGOs outside school are more likely to be formed in order to gain some material advantage for the school rather than in pursuit of true partnership or democratic co-operation.

For a number of reasons, then, a school's desire for self-determination may cause it to move backwards rather than advancing on the path to democracy.

At Stage 1, you will have something of a siege mentality with regard to the school. The interests of the school are paramount, and outside influences (including parents) are only likely to do damage: at best they are ignorant of what the school's needs and aims really are, and at worst they may become competitors who would profit from seeing the school weakened in some way.

The students themselves must be reminded that the school is better than all the rest, and they must prove themselves worthy of it. Diversity is not an issue. It's not the school's job to reach out to disadvantaged groups and minorities: besides, these children could have a negative effect on the school's academic record and thus damage its status.

Characteristic comments:

> "*The interests of the school come first.*"
> *"Students must measure up to what the school demands: we cannot spend time and energy on those who don't."*
> *"We don't need other people getting involved: school knows best."*

Stage 2

School wants its students to excel above all in order to raise its own status.	There is some recognition that the school is part of a larger community – but little or no engagement with it.	School knows it is there for its students and to some extent their parents, but does not see them as in any sense partners.	Students and parents are acknowledged as stakeholders – but not as participants, rather as subjects of the school's omniscience.	School will engage with partner organisations – but is suspicious of them and only really seeks material support.	School is prepared to publicise good practice, but in search of status, not for the sake of sharing expertise.	School is passive with regard to hard-to-reach or minority groups: it sees it as their responsibility to become involved if they wish to.

At Stage 2 you are likely to be anxious to be seen to play your part in the community. So it's pleasing if community groups can use some of the school's facilities. Communication with parents and families is important: the school likes to keep them informed of what it expects from them, but it doesn't invite feedback. If you are by nature an entrepreneur you may be making contact with businesses: the idea of business sponsorship bringing in a bit of money is an attractive one, as long as businesses don't make demands in return.

You are proud of some of the excellent teaching ideas you're putting into practice in the school: the publicity gained for them enhances the status of the school. You may not want to go into too much detail, however: there's no point in giving everything away, and that school just down the road did almost as well as you in last year's examinations.

You're very pleased when students from minority groups apply to join your school. But they do need to be warned how hard they will have to work in order to fit in.

Characteristic comments:

"We always ensure the parents know exactly what is expected."
"The school's here for you: don't let it down."
"We welcome business sponsorship."
"We welcome hard-working students from minority groups."

Stage 3

There is pressure on teachers and students to achieve high standards, partly for students' sake but with an eye to the competition too.	School is involved in and supports community activities, but does not involve the community in its internal operations.	There is regular contact with students' parents and families; school is welcoming and invites their views.	There is a powerful flow of information from school, and parents are welcome to express their views. School links with organisations that are welcome guests, especially as experts to lecture to or advise students.	School readily shares its good practice with other schools and professionals.	School makes significant efforts to reach out to, and recruit students and teachers from, minorities and hard-to-reach groups, and to assimilate them into the school culture and to succeed.

At this stage you'll be proud of the extent to which your school reaches out into the community. It's great to see so many students involved in various forms of community service: those Christmas parties for the old people are wonderful!

You're keen to give opportunities to parents to say what they think about the education that is offered to their children – though it's a pity that so many of their ideas are not really suitable. Still, it's good to talk.

Another strength lies in the way you invite parents, local businesses and community leaders to come in and share their experience and knowledge with students. It's good, too, to have regular meetings with staff from local schools and share good practice. And the school actively seeks applications from students from minorities and hard-to-reach groups and helps them to fit into the school culture.

Characteristic comments:

"We welcome many visitors to the school. Parents are always welcome too."
"We strongly encourage diversity."
"We expect students to achieve highly – and are pleased for them when they do."

Stage 4

Excellence is for the students: realistically, that benefits the school and community too.	All stakeholders and the community itself are seen as contributing to and benefiting from school.	School sees all stakeholders and partners as valuable contributors as well as potential recipients of benefits: more than a partnership, this is real democratic engagement.

In this Key Area the Three Principles of EDC merge to a large extent: when the democratic values of co-operation, communication and involvement are embedded in school life, they counteract the negative effects of competition. At this stage, things come together. As the grid says, visitors to the school are partners in shared activity, to the benefit of all. Involvement in the community and by the community is seen as an entirely two-way process, with benefits for all.

The school trusts (and helps) its students to excel: that trust is rewarded by benefits to the status of the institution, but it is not the prime motivation, because the school is very conscious that it exists and works for the students and for the wider community.

Characteristic comments:

"We're all part of this."
"We work together: we give to the school and it gives back to us."
"And look how well our students perform in exams!"

5.4 Student discipline

Student council at Wolverhampton Grammar School

Discipline remains the major fear of schools and teachers who cannot see where a move towards democracy is taking them. They fear that students, given a voice, will be impossible to discipline; they will argue against every instruction; they will undermine the authority of the school; it will end in chaos.

The democratic experience is quite the opposite, but that is not a matter for argument here. This grid separates to follow the Three Principles to a lesser extent than the other Key Areas, because it all comes together in synergy. The four Stages here are, in truth, somewhat predictable, coming after the extrapolations of the other three Key Areas.

Stage 1

School's management sets and enforces the rules – even when students clearly resent or resist them.	Rules are rules, and no allowance is made for different cultures, backgrounds or needs.

At this first stage, the school sets all the rules. Teachers (or rather school leaders) know best. There is no discussion about it. There are no excuses (such as "difference") for not following the rules.

Characteristic comments:

"Do as you're told – or else."
"I don't care who you are: you know the rules."

Stage 2

School's management sets and enforces the rules, but seeks some response from students – and is frequently disappointed.	The school has some awareness of the diversity of students and may make some rules bearing differences in mind (e.g. dress or other religious observance).

You want students to take responsibility, and sometimes talk to them about it. But they always let you down.

You're tolerant of difference: for example, you make no difficulty about observance of religious festivals. And in societies where school uniform is worn you're flexible about students who dress according to a religious code.

Characteristic comments:

"Why won't you act responsibly?"
"Why do you always let me down?"
"This is a tolerant school."

Stage 3

Though there is a limit to the extent of concessions available, many rules are negotiated and agreed with the student body...	... and many students co-operate in and even help to enforce the code of behaviour.	Minorities are involved in the consultation that is available.

There is a strong feeling that, though school sets the rules, there is a lot of scope for discussion and negotiation. Students readily get involved in this, and compromises are struck. Such discussions always ensure that minorities' views are sought. Senior students are willing to take on authority roles to enforce these rules. They give a strong lead to younger children.

Characteristic comments:

"We can talk about this – but you know there's a bottom line."
"Someone has to keep order: you know the rules."
"We get a say in things."
"We checked that minority groups were OK with this."

Stage 4

The school's entire behaviour code and rules are devised through consultation and negotiation with the student body, ensuring that all minorities are fully involved, and students play their part either as "good citizens" or as authority figures (prefects/monitors), or both, in implementing them and seeing that they are enforced.

Rules are democratically decided – either by existing groups or by creating new fora – and they are democratically followed. Good order is in everyone's interest – so long as everyone had a say in how it was planned.

When there is a climate of mutual respect there is no "them and us" attitude between teachers and students, and bullying is at a minimum too.

Characteristic comments:

"It's our school: we make it work."
"This school is for everyone. It must be good for everyone."

6. Step by step: the road to democratic governance

So where do you start? Once you have realised that democratic governance is the only way to go, you have to identify where you want to start. School management is carried out in many arenas, formal and informal. Your level of democratic governance can be seen quite clearly in the way you treat formal processes in relation to higher authorities, staff and students, but probably even more in the way you handle all the ad hoc decisions you make in informal contexts during the day. Your personal visions; your management of daily routines; conflict resolution; informal encounters with students, staff and visitors; they all reflect, more than any written declaration, what you really value most. Of course, this does not imply that laws and rules are unimportant or can be neglected.

In this chapter, you will find practical advice on how to proceed, step by step, from authoritarian to democratic school governance in some of the formal and informal processes a school leader has to handle. The Key Areas are:

1. Governance, leadership and public accountability
2. Value-centred education
3. Co-operation, communication and involvement: competitiveness and school self-determination
4. Student discipline

We illustrate how these four Key Areas will reflect democratic governance in four typical contexts, both formal and informal.

Formal contexts

A school is an institution, and in many respects a bureaucratic one. As head you have to know the rules and procedures, and how they impact on people. So you have to operate meetings and structures and play your formal role. This does not have to act against your efforts to democratise: on the contrary, the formal settings provide you with as many opportunities as informal ones to spread democracy. We will look at four formal contexts where your attitudes and values can be demonstrated:

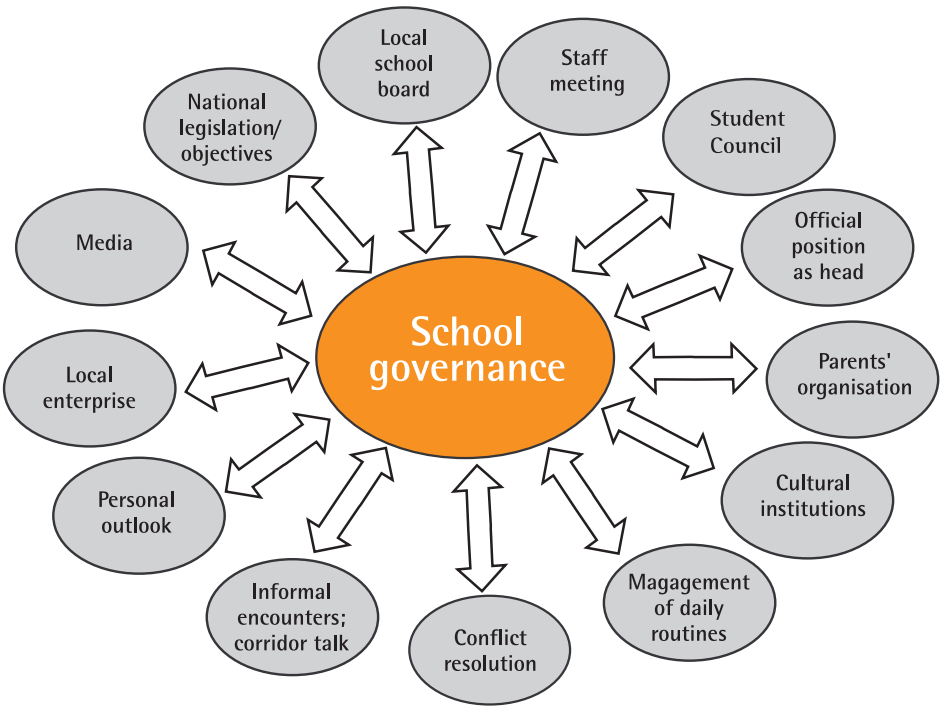
Personal position
Local school board
Staff meetings
Students

Informal contexts

At school, the head can never step out of the role of leader; the way you react to everyday situations is always judged by the expectations and demands linked to that role. What you do is more important than what you preach. As above, we will look at four informal contexts where your attitudes and values can be demonstrated:

Personal outlook
Corridor talk/socialising
Daily management
Conflict resolution

The diagram overleaf shows how many arenas there are, formal and informal, in which you work and which you can use as opportunities. Think about it and then move on to considering how (and where) you might take the steps that follow.


School governance
Local school board
Staff meeting
Student Council
Official position as head
Parents' organisation
Cultural institutions
Magagement of daily routines
Conflict resolution
Informal encounters; corridor talk
Personal outlook
Local enterprise
Media
National legislation/ objectives

Key Area 1: Governance, leadership, management and public accountability

Formal contexts

Personal position

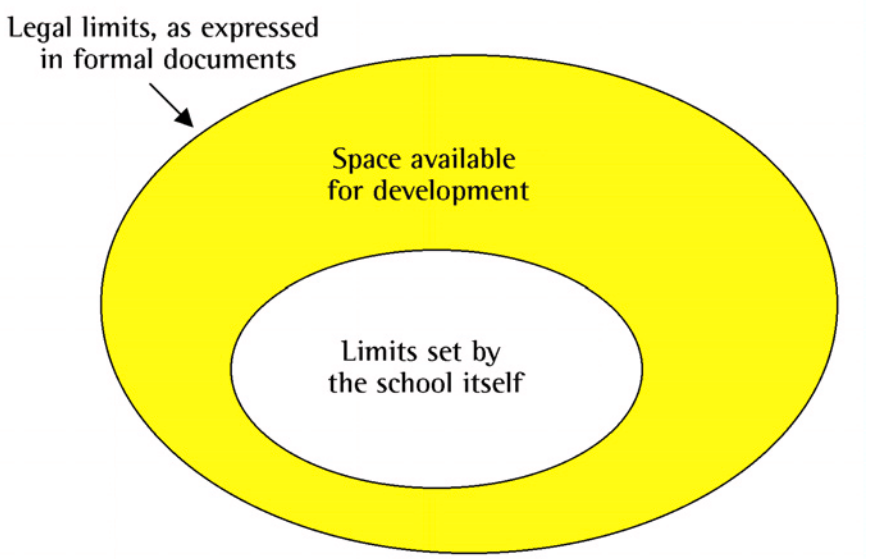
The school leader is the official representative of the school. In this capacity you are accountable upwards and downwards in the educational system. You also have to handle strong pressure groups like parents' organisations, cultural institutions and the media. The objectives are frequently contradictory. The way you handle these stakeholders and whose interests you prioritise are clear indicators of the extent to which you have a genuinely democratic perspective on school governance.

Step 1: Your authority and your loyalty to the governors are not questioned, neither by you nor by others in the school. Legislation and position are the most powerful factors in the management of the school. In the long run, this is not satisfactory at all: no development can take place, and your role as a leader will be mainly ceremonial. As a new principal, you might find it wise to start here, but with growing confidence you will probably start moving towards greater independence. After all, you are the leader.	*Try this:* Focus on one area; study the regulations from the point of view of democracy. Ask yourself: why this rule? Allow some flexibility where you can see benefits for all.
Step 2: You have reached a deeper understanding of the ideas behind existing regulations. You don't agree with everything but still find it difficult to deviate from the rules, or you are uncertain about how to interpret them.	*Try this:* Discuss legislation with colleagues; take a course in school legislation. That might give you the insights you need to be more confident about what you can have an influence on. (Basic legal knowledge is a valuable but often neglected asset for school heads.) Study in depth official policy documents and declare more openly your personal interpretations and standpoints.
Step 3: You analyse your role as the link between school authorities and the stakeholders and realise that you are equally accountable to both. This creates pressure and uncertainty but also opens up opportunities for change.	*Try this:* Focus on what is best for the stakeholders. Find out what is expected of you from both sides. Read the policy documents and test the limits!

Governance, leadership and public accountability
Personal position

The limits are wider than you think! Gunnar Berg, Professor of Education at the University of Uppsala, Sweden, has illustrated it like this:[5]

5. Berg, Gunnar, Skolan som organisation. Uppsala: Uppsala Studies in Education No 15. Almqvist & Wiksell, 1981.


Legal limits, as expressed in formal documents
Space available for development
Limits set by the school itself

Local school board

The governing systems for schools vary from country to country. In most forms of public education, the responsible authority is a local board, representing the political majority. The situation is similar for private schools. The degree of local or regional autonomy also varies from country to country but, regardless of the level of independence, the school leader is responsible to some form of higher authority.

Step 1: In your contacts with the school board,[6] you tend to limit yourself to formal reports according to regulations. As part of a hierarchical system, you have to make tactical choices in your contacts with the authorities. The information you give them tends to be minimised and sometimes biased. The governing bodies are told what the school leader thinks they want to hear.	*Try this:* Allow nuances into your information. If you still feel a bit uncertain, try to direct the criticism to factors beyond the governors' control. Make sure to base your information on facts and give suggestions for improvement.
Step 2: You give a truer picture of life at school and of the consequences of political decisions. You can see the school board as a partner, not only as a higher administrative level.	*Try this:* When an outdated or inadequate rule leads to inefficiency or absurdities, make your point very clearly to the authority in question and try to disclaim responsibility for the consequences.
Step 3: When dealing with the decision makers, you refer to your meetings and negotiations with stakeholders and show your strong loyalty with their wishes and needs. Realise that you have better knowledge about the current situation in the school than the members of the board and that they can do a better job if you give them continuous and unbiased information.	*Try this:* Invite governors to the school; let them meet students and staff without being present yourself. Invite students to meetings with the school board and show clearly that even if you value the opinions of both sides, your main task is to protect the interests of your students. Make it clear that you see students as equal partners in this.

6. The term "school board" is used here as a general definition of the governing body to which the school leader is primarily accountable.

Staff meetings

An important instrument for school governance is the staff meeting. The meetings can be reduced to an opportunity of information and practical problem solving, but it can also be a means for strengthening common values, overall objectives and involvement.

Step 1: Since you see yourself as accountable primarily to higher authorities, your view on your staff is mainly instrumental. You select and give information at random, with small expectations on active participation. Important decisions are your responsibility and yours only. This can be a heavy burden to bear but it also gives you a sense of control.	*Try this:* Give more frequent and regular information, at least when there is no risk of opening up your decisions to criticism or judgement. Given more information, the staff will do an even better job.
Step 2: You have made it a rule to share some information before making decisions. Also, the staff are asked for their opinion on some issues. But information still goes only one way and every major decision is still yours.	*Try this:* You make sure that the staff get relevant information in good time before the meeting, to give them a chance to form an opinion. Listen more actively to what they say, negotiate, persuade. Be prepared to compromise. Build your arguments on personal beliefs rather than position. Keep in mind that your staff are well educated, and that their added competence in all likelihood exceeds yours in many fields.
Step 3: Thanks to systematic and honest information, the staff can take active part in setting the agenda and in the decision-making. You make sure the staff meetings are not all filled with down-to-earth matters like copying machines or mobile phones. Instead, you make room for exchange of pedagogic and ideological ideas. You also offer some input from inspirational speakers and experts. Now and then students are invited to staff meetings to give their view on things.	*Try this:* Together with staff and students, you form a vision for your school. Based on that vision, and in accordance with the political will and the spirit of the curriculum, you make all the important decisions together. Many of the decisions you used to make yourself are now entirely delegated to your staff.

Students

In most national curricula you will find paragraphs on students' right to participate in democratic processes in their school; for instance, in the form of a student council.[7] But whatever the regulation says, there will be no significant student democracy unless the school leader supports it. The fact that some students are very young is no excuse for not practising democracy.

Step 1:

There are schools where no student council exists, or where it is unknown to the majority of students, and where the members are elected on unclear grounds.

Try this:

Invite all interested students to a meeting. Give them advice about the possibility of starting a student council. Then, wait and see.

Step 2:

The student council exists but is not very active. A few students keep it going, but students in general do not take much notice of it. The members of the council do not get enough information about important issues to form serious opinions. When they are allowed a voice, it is in matters of little consequence, such as the menu for a class party or the colour of a classroom wall.

Try this:

If you really want students to be active in formal democratic processes, you have to support them. They need guidance, systematic and comprehensive information, practical training and resources: a place to meet, some office equipment and time to do the job.[8] Also, make sure that students who take active part in school democracy get credit for their efforts.

Step 3:

Thanks to systematic and comprehensive information, everybody has been able to form an opinion and take active part in the democratic process. Together with staff and students, you form a vision for your school. Based on that vision, and in accordance with the political will and the spirit of the curriculum, you make all the important decisions together.

The fact that the ultimate responsibility is still yours does not deter you too much. True democratic governance is based on trust.

Try this:

All important decisions in the school are made by a school government, where students and staff are represented in equal numbers. In primary schools, parent representatives are also included. The head has the decisive vote. This model for school governance is still rare but exists in some schools, for instance in the Nordic countries.

7. By "student council" is meant a group of students acting as representatives for their peers. It is often also called "school council". The student council is supported by the leadership of the school.

8. You can get more practical advice in Trafford B, 2006, *Raising the Student Voice*, Leicester UK, Association of School and College Leaders (www.ascl.org.uk).

An example of democratic governance

In the Swedish city of Södertälje, all upper secondary schools have a local school board where the students are in the majority. This school board decides about things like:

- budget, at least parts of it;
- recruitment;
- school year and holidays;
- policy documents;
- mission statement.

In these schools the school head gets a somewhat different role as a managing director and negotiator who really has to use democratic governing methods!

Informal contexts

Personal outlook

In a process of change, you have to start with yourself. What are your incentives?

Step 1: Personal reflection is not very important. Your mission is to carry out what higher authorities have decided. The important thing is to know the rules. If problems arise, that is where you look for solutions. Students are seen as objects for teaching.	*Try this:* Ask yourself sometimes: Does this rule really make sense? If not, is there anything I can do? You might also question your reasons for becoming a school leader. There must be more to it than putting school legislation into practice.
Step 2: You have analysed and understood the intentions of the legislators. Basically, you agree. You see the value of democratic governance and the need to meet the wishes of students and their parents, but also the risks and obstacles. You do not wish to release mechanisms that will prove uncontrollable.	*Try this:* Give yourself time for reflection: what is my vision? Why is democratic governance necessary? What are the benefits? How can we realise it in our school? Look for good examples and learn from them, even if you cannot apply them in full to your school.
Step 3: You are convinced that democratic processes can and should be used at all levels in your school. The question is how to make everybody share the same vision.	*Try this:* Think strategically: analyse where you can win some easy victories and identify target areas to start with. Make a plan for the next two years and set personal goals. Have patience!

Corridor talk/socialising

Few working places are so full of informal encounters as a school, with a great number of people in a relatively small area. As a head, you can avoid many of these time-consuming contacts by staying in your office, or you can use them to reinforce the democratic ethos you are developing in your school.

Step 1: In a school with many hundred students, the head does not talk very much with students outside the office and probably not with members of the staff either. The contacts are limited to polite greetings or occasional correction of bad behaviour.	*Try this:* Visit staff room, canteen and schoolyard at least once a day. Talk to people and visit classrooms without having an errand or special reason. This does not have to take more than twenty minutes a day but is a good investment.
Step 2: You apply management by walking around. Everybody knows who you are and most faces at your school are at least vaguely familiar to you. Students see you as a person, not just as the head.	*Try this:* Don't hesitate to get involved in situations. Invite yourself to meetings, such as a form tutor's meeting with parents, or the mathematics teachers' planning conference. If you have some special interest or talent, use it to your advantage.
Step 3: You are determined to apply democratic governance wherever possible. You have made sure that important members of your staff support your decisions. That will make it easier for the more insecure to venture to try new methods.	*Try this:* Take every opportunity to spread and explain your vision. Talk, talk, talk: repeat the message, and encourage the right tendencies wherever you find them. Use positive feedback and rewards to keep the good processes going. Don't spend too much energy on the small unchangeable minority.

Daily management

Routine administration occupies a great part of the school leader's time and cannot be neglected. However, it is easy to get trapped behind your desk, knowing you have to do these things and to do them right. The papers are there in front of you, easily catching your attention and, most of the time, easily attended to.

Step 1: Administrative routines and control fill most of the day. Since the responsibility is all yours, you have to check that everything is done correctly.	*Try this:* Delegate much more of the routine tasks to the administrative staff. They will probably like the expanded responsibility. Revise the routines; you may be able to manage without some of them.
Step 2: You discuss daily routines with those involved and see what else you can leave to others to decide. If they need extra training, give it to them.	*Try this:* Make sure that the administrative staff never forget who you are there for, and involve them in activities with students. Agree on guiding principles instead of detailed instructions. Give some members of the staff greater authorisation so you can concentrate on the pedagogic leadership.
Step 3: By delegating as much as possible, you have made sure that you will not spend more than a minimum of time on the papers piling up on your desk. You give priority to the right things: rule of law, general objectives and what is best for the students.	*Try this:* Take for granted that everybody has the will and ability to make the right decisions. Regular evaluations can largely replace control. As always, your management is based on trust.

Conflict resolution

In all management, conflict resolution is a recurring task, and school leadership is no exception. A complication for school leaders is that the school is not only a working place for students and staff, it is also a public authority, exerting power over some of its citizens. This, and the fact that so many people spend so much time in the same confined area, leads to conflicts now and then. Conflict resolution is sometimes a formal matter: a conflict may, if not resolved at an early stage, result in formal and legal procedures, causing nothing but harm to all involved.

There is a risk that the school leader gets stuck in the role of conflict-solver or is used by teachers to frighten students. This is something you must avoid. Simple breaches of regulation should be taken care of by the staff, not the head. Encourage people to sort out differences through dialogue.

Step 1:

As the head of the school, you decide and no protests will help, even if you realise afterwards that your solution was not quite right. However, conflicts solved this way have a tendency to reappear.

Try this:

Listen to both sides and ask for their suggestions before deciding. Don't be afraid to show uncertainty, and be prepared to change your verdict if new circumstances appear.

Step 2:

You involve others, first and foremost the conflicting parties, in resolving the problem. Take the opportunity to set a good example of mutual respect and responsibility.

Try this:

Establish routines, e.g. a students' committee for conflict resolution. Take measures to forestall conflicts, such as involving students in setting up school regulations.

Step 3:

You always try to identify and explain underlying mechanisms for the conflict. Examine structures: some bad behaviour might be caused by organisational or physical factors that can be changed. If the same type of conflicts keep recurring, look for structural explanations: how the schedule is organised, the school facilities are used or if resources can be redistributed. Take time to analyse the conflict before acting and, if structural changes are needed, involve the school board.

Make sure that all parties involved respect each other and, if possible, reach mutual understanding. Conflicts are best resolved by those involved. Act as mediator and aim for consensus. Use your authority only as a last resort.

Key Area 2: Value-centred education

A homogeneous society with common values is a thing of the past, if it ever has existed. Historically, public schooling has always been a tool for those in power to impress certain values on their subjects. This is still the case but, in a democratic society, the values we want to transfer to the younger generation are established and maintained openly and in democratic processes. This chapter deals primarily with values like democracy, human rights and respect for diversity and how these values appear in formal and informal contexts in a school. Much attention is paid to the students' academic achievements today, but we must not forget another important role for education: to promote values and social skills that are a prerequisite for peaceful co-existence in the modern globalised society. Once you have defined from the analyses in the previous chapters how far you have come in conveying EDC/HR values in education in your school, you will find here some advice how to proceed.

Personal position		
Step 1: You have not given democracy or other values in education much thought, since no explicit directives can be found in the curriculum. Your responsibility is that everything is taught according to existing regulations.	*Try this:* Widen your perspective: what is said of values in constitutional laws, UN conventions and the like? Also, raise your awareness of changing values in society. Many books on this topic are available for theoretical studies.[9]	Personal position Value-centred education
Step 2: You recognise your responsibility to transfer not only knowledge and skills but also a set of values to students. You also recognise the rights of students to have a say in what is right and wrong. It is necessary to make your staff share this insight.	*Try this:* Widen the perspectives of your staff. Use external sources for in-school training, discussion forums, workshops, etc. Analyse and define together common values essential in a good society, and in your school. Invest in staff study days for this! Make sure the values become explicit in all your policy documents.	
Step 3: You have ensured that all processes in your school are carried out according to a school ethos of democracy and respect for diversity. School books and teaching material are examined on the basis of the same principles.	*Try this:* Your responsibility is to maintain this high level of value-based education. Watch out constantly for discrimination or other types of unethical behaviour. Use your position to serve as a role model, and consider it an obligation to have an optimistic outlook on the future and a strong faith in your fellow human beings, regardless of their age.	

An example of value-centred education

Sometimes it takes courage to focus on values and to bring difficult problems into the open. In the Vocational and Training School for Forestry and Woodworking in Karlovac, Croatia, a study project on trafficking was carried out in 2005.

The goals of the project were:

- to educate young people to recognise the problem, its causes and consequences;
- to develop skills to avoid dangerous situations.

Methods: participative methods for practising active citizenship, for example talks, parliamentary discussions, role play, making posters and journals, films and the Internet.

Partners involved: teachers, students, the mayor and the town council of Karlovac, local police and NGOs and local media.

The project was awarded and recognised on the national level as good EDC/HRE practice.

9. See for instance Putman, *Bowling Alone*, Simon & Schuster, New York 2001, or Sennett, *The Corrosion of Character*, WW Norton & Co Ltd, London 2000.

Local school board

The extent of local guidelines for value-centred education varies from country to country, and if there are local guidelines, they seldom deviate in any significant way from the national school ethos. Confessional schools, where they exist, are exceptions, of course. As a school leader, however, you can use your position to emphasise the importance of democratic values in practical use on all levels in society, not least in the governing bodies that are closest to the students and their parents.

Step 1: You do what you are officially accountable for to the local school board. Other values than those expressed in the official documents are not your concern.	*Try this:* Describe to the local school governors the need for ethical guidelines. Give suggestions, but be careful to start with small steps.
Step 2: You have managed to raise an interest in the mission of the school in the rapidly changing society. As a school leader with close contact with young families and children, you know more than most about changing values, or about changes in family patterns, and the necessity of implementing common values.	*Try this:* Inform the local school board about the progress you've made in your school in fields like active participation from staff and students. You act as spokesman not only from governors to school, but also from school to governors.
Step 3: Your relation to the school board is based on trust. You are an important source of information for the decision makers. Don't forget that you are the expert and that you, by providing the local governors with valuable information, can help them make better decisions. Some of your suggestions have already led to obvious improvements.	*Try this:* Use your position to draw the governors' attention to the needs of vulnerable groups or other areas where you can see that democratic values and human rights might be threatened. The good results you have shown in this field may make it easier for the authorities to provide you with the extra funding you might need to improve the situation for children and young people at risk.

Staff meetings

Teachers often work alone, behind closed classroom doors, and the result of their effort is often judged by the academic achievement of their students and not much else. They have few opportunities to meet for pedagogic and ethical discussions. The staff meeting should be such an occasion.

Step 1:

The tasks of the staff are limited to teaching and maintaining order in the classroom. Formal knowledge and skills always come before attitudes and values. Staff meetings are used to settle technical and formal questions.

Try this:

Make changes in the agenda: widen the perspective to other issues, such as ethical dilemmas known to all teachers. You can also give the staff some homework before the meeting: to read an article on a specific subject, to describe an ethical dilemma they have met, or to write down a personal opinion on, say, how to reduce truancy.

Step 2:

Staff meetings are also used to increase competence, e.g. by input from experts: what happens in the world outside the school that has effects on values? You make sure the staff are updated on what happens in the surrounding world, especially about changing values and social patterns.

Try this:

Based on the general familiarity with current changes in values and social life in general, the staff can focus on understanding and prevention instead of control and sanctions. You don't have to use staff meetings for settling simple administrative or practical matters; people take their responsibility and solve such problems without your help.

Step 3:

Since routine matters and interpretation of rules no longer take all the time, values and objectives are the dominating issues on the agenda. It is important that you, as the leader, have given yourself time for reflection and studies, so you can be a source of confidence and inspiration for your staff.

Staff, students and school leaders work together to formulate the school ethos. This declaration is known and shared by all. You make sure the forms and contents of the education are in accordance with EDC/HR values.

Students

What makes a school successful? Many surveys indicate that a successful school is a school that always puts the student's needs and interests first. In a good school, no one ever forgets who the school is there for: the student.

Step 1:

In an authoritarian school, the students form the lowest level in the school hierarchy with no influence on educational matters. Their values are not taken into account.

Try this:

Encourage the staff to stress universal values, not only facts and skills, when teaching. Invite students to take part in setting up regulations for the school and in other decisions where values are strongly involved.

Step 2:

In a classroom of today, students from various ethnic and cultural backgrounds meet, and the school becomes the lowest common denominator in their lives. Therefore, we must consider the school the ideal place for implementing democratic and human rights values, a place where differing opinions are met with respect and open attitudes.

Try this:

We must make students aware that school books do not necessarily represent indisputable truths; the text has always been filtered through a writer's system of values.

Step 3:

What shall we teach? It has become clear that knowledge and skills are not enough. We must include critical and independent thinking as an objective in the study plans for all subjects. You realise the necessity to involve students, formally and informally, in the work of establishing the ethical framework for your school.

Try this:

Challenge the norm by highlighting diversity. Always point out the advantages of wider frames of reference, and don't forget the knowledge you have in the classroom, in the experiences of your students.

See also Step 3 under *"Staff meetings"*.

Informal contexts

We have said it before: good intentions in written documents are of little value if school leaders and staff do not show, often and in everyday situations, that the formal declarations really tell the truth.

Personal outlook	
Step 1: Your personal values are not relevant. You put your faith in the authorities above you. Values are not a priority, except perhaps stability, order and obedience.	*Try this:* Ask yourself: what are my incentives? What kind of school do I want? What kind of society? What values do I want to transfer to my students? (Or you could simply ask yourself: why do I want to be a school leader?)
Step 2: You are clear about what you want in terms of values that ought to be evident in teaching and daily life at school. You have also started to spread your thoughts to people around you.	*Try this:* Raise your ambitions: you want the whole school to embrace the same values, so you spend time and energy on spreading the message. You also involve students in formal and informal talks on democracy, human rights and respect for all. As always, encourage good initiatives.
Step 3: You truly enjoy new aspects on life, as reflected in the behaviour and values of all the different sections of society that are represented in your school. Your personal engagement is a source of inspiration for students and staff.	*Try this:* Make everybody understand the power of good examples. Teachers and other adults at school must be made deeply aware of their function as role models, and older students that they serve the same purpose for the younger ones.

Personal outlook

Value-centred education

Corridor talk/socialising

Being a school leader is to some extent a solitary job, just like most managerial positions, and there is always a risk of alienating yourself from employees and students.

Step 1: Corridor talk is in most cases a waste of time.	*Try this:* Ask yourself: what social patterns do I want my students to adopt? What is a good model for social intercourse in a working-place? What values are reflected in my behaviour?
Step 2: Informal encounters give you valuable information about the social climate and the code of conduct at your school. You are not afraid of being personal and encourage students and staff to share their thoughts and feelings with you.	*Try this:* Increase opportunities for students and staff to meet outside the classroom: shared cafeteria, lunch facilities and other recreation areas for staff and pupils could be a step towards increased understanding.
Step 3: All over the school, you can feel the welcoming and undemanding friendliness that comes out of the genuine interest for fellow human beings. You arrange social events for staff and students: celebrate anniversaries, arrange sports events and other competitions, anything that brings people together and gives the students positive images of co-existence across all kinds of social boundaries. A positive side-effect might be that students tend to be more loyal and co-operative when they have seen a teacher in a favourable light somewhere outside the classroom.	

Corridor talk/socialising

Value-centred education

Daily management

Much of the daily management is of a formal character. The informal aspect is the degree of priority and energy you give to that part. But daily management also includes the way you answer questions, how available you are and how you handle simple everyday situations.

Step 1:

You take pride in perfect bookkeeping. School board, staff and stakeholders can be sure everything is in order.

Try this:

Ask yourself: is this all there is? It is easy to get stuck in the administrative trap; the tasks are concrete, necessary and easy to accomplish. Implementing values is a much more open-ended affair, and there is no obvious way to start and no exact and reliable methods for measuring the outcomes.

Step 2:

Of course correct management is necessary, but administrative routines are just the framework. Minimise the time spent on management connected with your position. Prioritise education and your role as bearer of democratic values.

Try this:

Have patience and a long-term perspective. Values are a field where results don't show at once, and the outcomes are not as easy to predict. Use ordinary situations to exemplify values: if a message on a notice board is written in an imperious or negative tone, make the originator rewrite it. In addition, of course, make sure your own directives to staff and students are written in the right spirit.

Step 3:

Reserve time in your personal agenda for ideological leadership: make sure you have time for governance, not just management. Keep in mind that democracy has to be reinvented for every new generation of students!

Conflict resolution

In an authoritarian school, the head is often given – or assumes voluntarily – the role of judge in all kinds of conflicts. An unfortunate consequence of this is the distance it creates between the school leader and the rest of the school. In schools of this type conflicts tend to be regarded as threats to the system and not as starting-points for development or, at least, for reflection. The way you look at conflicts is an indicator of how you look at students and staff.

Step 1: If you are uncertain, you look in the regulations for advice when settling a conflict. It is important to sort out who is to blame.	*Try this:* Listen actively and ask follow-up questions to understand more deeply what both sides have to say. When they react strongly against a decision, try to find out what underlying values or motives there might be that caused their reaction.
Step 2: It is important to you to respect the integrity of the wrongdoer as well, not only the injured party. You also base your judgement on your experience that in most conflicts, both sides are to blame.	*Try this:* Some conflicts are more important to solve than others, even if they may seem trivial. Watch out for conflicts that may have their roots in discrimination because of gender, ethnicity, looks or handicap.

Step 3:

Accept that not all conflicts can be easily solved. See conflicts as expressions of different values, and appreciate that understanding and resolution often lie in tolerance, acceptance and compromise, not in finding a scapegoat.

You can also see a conflict as an incentive for development and as an opportunity to involve students, parents and other participants who may be of help. Your aim is to foresee and prevent conflicts. Eventually, much of the energy that was spent on conflict resolution can be used for better purposes: to strengthen students' understanding of and loyalty to each other, the school and, in the end, to society.

Key Area 3: Co-operation, communication and involvement: competitiveness and school self-determination

The school world is often described as separated from the rest of society, from the real world, and teachers will often hear that they do not know very much of real life, since they have spent so much of their life in school. The same is often said about school leaders who, in fact, often run businesses with the same number of employees as middle-sized companies. There might be some truth in the criticism, though. Until a couple of generations ago, a school was seen as a representative of higher authorities or a privilege for the rich, and you can still find schools and school ideologies that bear the stamp of exclusiveness and dissociation from society. So, what we have to do is to open up our schools, get up on the stage and play our part in society. Whether we realise it or not, we are important actors, not spectators, in the process of building a democratic society. So, what steps can we take? And how do we meet competition without renouncing our core values?

Formal contexts

Personal position		
Step 1: Your main concern is the good reputation of your school. You make sure all outgoing information is checked, positive and uncontroversial. The best ambassador for the school is you.	*Try this:* Ask yourself: on what should a good reputation be built? How can we reach stability when so much is changing so fast?	Personal position
Step 2: You have made a deeper analysis of the objectives of a good school, as it is described in official documents. You realise that good teaching is not enough to create the best school. Your mission is wider than that: a school is the cultural and social glue in a modern, diversified society.	*Try this:* Go from the national/theoretical to the local and practical perspective: what is the best school for this community? Involve staff and stakeholders in the analysis. Invite the local media as soon as there is something of common interest going on. Also, make sure that the school has an attractive and updated home page.	
Step 3: Your main concern is that your school provides the best possible learning environment for its students. Your school also plays an active part in the local community. As the school head, you are an important person in society and in communities where it is possible for parents to choose a school for their children, the position of your school is more sustainable in relation to competing schools and not so exposed to short-lived trends.	*Try this:* Use your position to protect the interests of vulnerable groups and to engage people and organisations outside the school in dialogues on core values and active citizenship.	

Co-operation, communication and involvement

Local school board

The school board is your employer, and it is your task to put their visions into practice. We assume here that their intentions and yours point in the same direction.

Step 1: In your contacts with the school board, you emphasise the external picture of your school, such as favourable statistics on student achievement or good economic management.	*Try this:* Bring other aspects into the light. You might present one or two promising attempts at co-operation with local organisations or parents and also hint at some of the problems that need to be solved.
Step 2: In a publicly funded school, the school board probably has a wider perspective than just academic achievement. This is a good starting point for setting new goals for your school and its place in the community. You communicate your ambitions to the school board.	*Try this:* Be pro-active: inform yourself about the formal procedures and timetable for the school board. Their time horizon is often long and tends to follow the political terms of office. Serve the members of the board with well-prepared plans for co-operation and school development projects and be prepared to compromise.
Step 3: The school board sees you as the most reliable source of expertise on local school governance. The decisions made on the political level are in accordance with your long-term plans for your school and give you the space you need to handle competition and rapid change.	*Try this:* The whole community benefits from a prospering school. Use your position to get the resources you need to make the school even better. Point out the synergy effects you can gain from co-operating with other services in your community, such as health and social care. Let the local NGOs use your school facilities for their meetings when the school otherwise is empty.

Staff meetings

As society changes, so does school, and so does the role of the teachers. Many families have their roots in some other place, within or outside the country, and the school functions as their most important social network. This makes it more difficult to draw a clear line between the responsibilities of the school and those of other institutions in society. Your task as a school leader is to open the eyes of your staff to these changes and to lead the way towards a new concept of what is the best school for your particular target group.

Step 1:

The assignment for the teachers is restricted to teaching. You often hear teachers say: "I'm a teacher, nothing else", or "This is a school, nothing else". And you agree.

Try this:

Be open to suggestions from staff who want to involve the outside world in their teaching. Announce clearly, to them and their sceptical colleagues, that they are on the right track.

Step 2:

The staff must be made aware of the extended role of school in the modern, diversified community: they should see school as an important unifying factor and themselves as important role models for young people. Use staff meetings to strengthen this new role of school and teachers.

Try this:

Engage experts for lectures and dialogues during staff meetings and study days. Involve staff and students in creating contacts with society. Employ external consultants for evaluation as a starting point for development. Encourage staff to use their personal networks to establish co-operation with the school, short-term as well as long-term.

Step 3:

Your school is a role model in the whole country. Your open attitude attracts the attention of many others. Staff and students are proud of their school and give the same type of positive messages to visitors. During staff meetings, time is often spent on analysing and reinforcing the image of your school.

You let students and staff represent the school in official situations since they are often the best ambassadors. Invite old students back to school to set good examples for the younger students.

Students

Nowadays, students are a volatile group, especially in urban areas. In some communities, if parents are not satisfied with the school, they may move their child to another. In this situation it is tempting to follow an easy way by trying to guess what is popular and adapt to that, in order to recruit and keep students. Another approach is to stick to old and well-tried concepts. So how can you combine the good old academic tradition with the transfer of cultural and ethical values in tough competition?

Step 1:

It is important for the school that the students show good academic achievement, so the students spend the entire school day on lessons. Other activities are few, since they take valuable time away from learning. Parents are informed about their obligations.

Try this:

Academic achievement has the highest priority, but there are other things that can be learned at school. The purpose of student involvement is still only one: to get better academic results than competing schools. The student council, if there is one, is allowed to hold meetings only after or between lessons.

Step 2:

To enhance effective learning, students must feel support and trust from adults. You ask them what they expect from school, and let them evaluate the teaching regularly. For the younger students, ask the parents as well.

Try this:

Give the student council space and time in the schedule/timetable. Invite parents to meetings so you can get to know their expectations of the school. Involve students and other stakeholders in social activities and create traditions to build a spirit of community in the school. To make a clearer connection between school subjects and working life, contact local enterprises. Parents can be of much help here. Let students visit working places, and invite representatives as guest lecturers to school.

Step 3:

See *"Staff meetings"*, above.

Student council: an example

A student council can be quite a simple arrangement, with a number of representatives for the student body meeting regularly, perhaps with a chairman and a secretary as the only leading positions. But it can also be organised much more elaborately, as in Illyés Gyula Secondary Grammar school in Budaörs, Hungary:

The Senate has two representatives from each class and is chaired by the Vice-president.

The Cabinet, led by the President, is the executive power. President and Vice-president are elected by the student council. Their mandate comes from the Senate.

The Court has one member from each class. The Court acts as mediator in conflicts between students and between students and teachers. The objective of the Court is to reach consensus between conflicting parties.

Members of the student council are given special training and support in their work by the school leader. One of the outcomes so far in Illyés Guyla Secondary Grammar school is greater mutual respect and trust between teachers and students. Also, the teachers tend to see students more as equal partners.

Informal contexts

Personal outlook

Step 1:

You get your highest satisfaction from good ratings in statistical reports. Competition is an inspiring challenge to you. Underprivileged children are seen as a threat.

Try this:

Ask yourself: we are doing things right, but are we doing the right things? Are we too confined to the school world here? Have we missed something important? And what happens if our ratings go down?

Step 2:

You want to extend the school's contacts with the outside world and the basis for student recruitment. You realise that young people need other qualifications than just good grades to be successful in life and you consider it your responsibility to provide them with some of those skills in school.

Try this:

Use your personal network to start with and invite NGOs to your school: Save the Children, environmentalists, the local chess club, or whatever you are familiar with that can vitalise the school day or inspire some students to a new and enriching activity. There is often among young people a great amount of idealism that we fail to recognise.

If you are criticised, open up for dialogue. Do not be defensive.

Step 3:

You see yourself as a coach, always supportive when you see improvement; even small and seemingly insignificant steps in the right direction are noticed and praised. You are still happy about the good results, but attribute part of this achievement to the open and co-operative spirit among staff and students. Your strong position makes it easier to be generous and share good practice with other schools.

You are proud of your school and of what you all have achieved together. It is clear to all that your constant talk of "democracy" and "responsibility" for all is genuine.

Spend considerable time every day outside your office. Take every opportunity to strengthen the morale of your staff and students.

Corridor talk/socialising

Step 1:

Important matters must be dealt with in formal meetings. What is said in casual encounters cannot be taken into account. Furthermore, it is not good for the reputation of the school, if critical comments or talk of problems are heard in the corridors.

Try this:

Don't underestimate what is said to you informally. What people say to their boss is seldom completely spontaneous; they have probably thought it through before. Therefore, do not be too quick to answer crucial questions in passing. Listen, show interest and gratitude, but take your time!

Step 2:

Look around: how do people communicate? For instance, if you do not want students to bring their bags into the library, you can instruct them in two ways: "You are forbidden to bring bags into the library" or, next to a shelf outside: "Please leave your bags here."

How do students or staff receive visitors? What are their first impressions?

Try this:

Always set a good example of openness and politeness. Make sure that messages on notice boards and in classrooms are expressed in positive tones. Prevention is always better than cure, and if a swarm of signs telling students and staff what they are not allowed to do meets students and visitors, they might think that everything that is not explicitly forbidden is allowed. This is not the way to foster independent, responsible citizens.

Step 3:

See *"Personal outlook"*, above.

Daily management

Step 1:

You do as much as possible yourself. That is the best guarantee that the daily management is done properly. It also means that there is no need to involve teachers in practical management. They can concentrate on teaching. The general attitude among all staff is to keep to your own field and not interfere with what others do. You have written, detailed job descriptions for all categories of staff.

Try this:

Let go of some of the more unqualified tasks. Examine all routines in co-operation with the staff involved. Together you will certainly find some better routines, so everybody gets time for more inspiring things. Give teachers more insight into school administration. They might come up with some good ideas for better efficiency, or at least not raise unrealistic demands.

Look for digital solutions to routine management. For instance, in many countries most parents have internet access; so much of the routine reports to parents can be done much more efficiently.

Step 2:

You make room in the schedule for extra-curricular activities and for teachers who want to try new methods of co-operation. Non-teaching staff are encouraged to take part in pedagogic activities.

Try this:

The more people get involved in general matters, the more responsibility they take. The need for control is reduced.

Step 3:

School readily shares its good practice with other schools and professionals. You invite media to the school, even when you have problems. That proves your self-confidence and courage.

You compare yourselves with other organisations; a school is not as special as you may think, and neither is school management. Be open-minded in your search for the best practice!

Conflict resolution

Conflict resolution as an aspect of democratic governance is treated quite extensively in the other Key Areas, to which such questions are more naturally related. Let us just give a few additional comments here about conflict resolution seen as an informal aspect of Key Area 3.

It is not always wise to hide conflicts; but you have to find a balance here: if the conflict is likely to upset many, or to spread outside school, it could be wise to be the one giving first-hand information, not to wait and react when the damage is done. Thus, openness can also be a good method for self-defence. It is always better for you and the school if the first version that the public will get is your own.

In an open climate, small conflicts are less likely to grow. Mutual respect and understanding are essential in conflict resolution, not personal prestige and retaliation.

Key Area 4: Student discipline

When so many people work together in one place, as we do in schools, discipline is necessary. The issue here is: what forces should be used to maintain discipline and order? What makes students follow given rules, and what makes them oppose them? Disciplinary problems are well known to everybody who has been to school, and are not easily solved. The reasons for discipline problems vary. Here are a few:

- big groups with few adults in sight;
- the subjects being studied do not motivate students. They also lack understanding of the benefit of studying some of the subjects;
- insensitive school attitudes to students' interests and values;
- teaching methods are not adapted to students' learning styles.

Often the source of the problem lies outside school:

- alienation because of social situation, ethnicity or some kind of disability;

and, of course, human weaknesses that are just as common among students as adults: laziness, carelessness, lack of empathy, and many more.

Add to this the circumstance that students go through extremely important and sometimes difficult phases in their personal development during the school years, and you will realise that schools are doing a fantastic job, every day, everywhere. So the way you look at discipline depends very much on how you look at young people. Are they potential risks that must be kept under strict control, or human beings just like us, only younger and less experienced?

As adults, we have to follow laws and regulations in society. The same is true of schools, of course. There must be rules. But, as in society in general, the rules in a school should be established through democratic processes by those affected by them.

Formal contexts

Personal position		
Step 1: You believe strongly in rules and authority as a means of maintaining order. Rules give stability, since the students will always know how to behave. It also simplifies social intercourse in school and saves teachers from many time-consuming discussions. The head of the school is always right, in his/her capacity as the highest authority.	*Try this:* Ask yourself: are there structural causes that can be eliminated? For instance, can we change the schedule/timetable so the adults in the school can spend more time among the students? Or make sure there are big clocks in many places to make it easier for students to get to their lessons on time? There might be some easy ways to increase the efficiency of your organisation, and reduce the time and energy spent on disciplinary measures.	Personal position / Student discipline
Step 2: As a head, you interpret the rules and the degree of sanctions, but you are willing to listen to the students before deciding and also more open to students' needs and interests. There might be mitigating circumstances; for instance, some discipline problems might have their roots in cultural differences.	*Try this:* Encourage teachers to focus more on student motivation than on teacher authority. Engage students in setting up rules. Ask for advice on how to handle cultural differences. Students, like everybody else, want to do their work in peace and quiet, not in chaos. Instead of talking in terms of rules and punishments, use *responsibilities* and *rights*.	
Step 3: Everybody is engaged in the constant effort of maintaining discipline and order. The difference now is that the code of conduct is known by all and internalised by most. Mutual respect and common interests are the guidelines for setting up rules in the school. Co-operation is more important than authority, and the rules are revised regularly by students, staff and leadership. Authority is something you earn, not something that just comes with position. But you are also aware that, as in the surrounding world, there will always be a few who do not easily adapt to established rules, or are unable to discipline themselves without the support of regulations and the threat of sanctions.	*Try this:* When you have to use sanctions, be clear but moderate. Be careful to criticise the deed, not the person. Encourage good behaviour by extending the liberties for those who show evidence of responsible and mature behaviour. Always keep in mind to set a good example as an adult to young and formable individuals, and that you have a responsibility to include these young citizens in society, not exclude them.	

Local school board

Normally, a school board should not interfere with the daily running of a school, so discipline is not something you go into when meeting the school board. It is seen as an internal affair in the school.

Step 1: As head of the school, you are responsible for maintaining discipline and order. This can be quite a heavy burden on a school leader.	*Try this:* Point to factors in society that have effects on school and that could be mitigated by some changes in local school politics. Raise the question: how can the school board and other local politicians compensate for segregation and other types of social injustices?
Step 2: You realise that discipline is a wider issue than just an internal affair for the school. As always, changes in society have immediate effects on life at school.	*Try this:* Use your position and expertise to convince the governing bodies about necessary adjustments in the distribution of resources. Give a nuanced picture, to neutralise populist demands for "law and order" without belittling genuine worries.
Step 3: The school board has a true picture of how good student behaviour is encouraged and maintained. Your school is seen as a good example for the implementation of good discipline.	*Try this:* Make the school board realise that good citizenship starts at school and resources spent here are a good investment for society.

Local school board

Student discipline

Staff meetings

The school head should always keep in mind that student discipline is of the utmost importance to teachers. Teachers are the ones who have to confront unruly behaviour first, and often alone among relatively big groups of students. So what can we do to give teachers the best conditions and tools for creating a good working environment for the students and themselves in the classroom?

Step 1:

The teacher has the authority in the classroom. In relation to the students, you always support the teacher in disciplinary matters. Nevertheless, you tend to see discipline problems as a personal weakness with the teacher or as lack of character in the student.

Try this:

Discuss discipline in general terms. Be careful not to blame individuals. Find out what the staff sees as the greatest obstacles for maintaining order. Encourage openness; what is seen as deeply personal can often turn out to be an experience shared by all, or almost all. Establish common rules; try at least to reach consensus on a very basic level and insist that everybody must be loyal to what you have decided together.

Step 2:

You have made some organisational improvements. Still, the general opinion is that the students have to change, not the school. Many teachers see discipline problems as personal and professional shortcomings.

Try this:

Bring in experts to give the staff better knowledge about the shifts of values that go on in society, and about ethnic and cultural differences. Also, try to see the situation from the students' point of view: what mechanisms in our school bring out the unwanted behaviour? What can we change?

Step 3:

Disciplinary problems are discussed in a wider perspective and are not seen as personal shortcomings among staff and leadership. A deep understanding is necessary of modern society and its impact on children.

Good order is of equal importance to all. Rules for behaviour are established and revised in consensus between staff, leadership and students. Students are made aware of their rights, but also of their responsibilities.

Students

In an authoritarian school, discipline is an objective in itself. Obedience is a virtue.

Step 1:

Students should obey rules and are not expected to question them.

Try this:

Allow students to express their opinions. If the objections are strong and unanimous, you might permit some small deviation from a rule that is clearly inadequate. Then, adapt the rule to the new practice.

Step 2:

When student reactions are strong against a rule, you take that as an indication that some change of the regulation is necessary.

Try this:

Involve students in policy-making. Give the student council a substantial role when setting up rules of conduct in the school. Our experience is that students are the real experts on what rules should look like to be realistic and easy to follow. They want peace and quiet, just like us.

Step 3:

Students are involved not only in discussing policies, but also in bringing rules into practice. Older students are given roles as mentors for younger ones. See also *"Staff meetings"*, Step 3, above.

Informal contexts

Personal outlook

Step 1:

You are of the opinion that children/students cannot be trusted to know what is right or wrong. They must learn to obey.

Try this:

Ask yourself: why should the head's interpretation of the rules always take precedence? Invite students for discussions on behaviour and rules. Also, share your thoughts with the staff.

Step 2:

You have realised that there are other reasons for lack of discipline than bad character. You are also self-critical: you could have avoided some of your disciplinary problems if you had been more flexible.

Try this:

Give older students more rights within a specific area and see how they react. Express clearly what degree of responsibility you expect them to take.

For example, you could give students free access to the computer room for a trial period, provided they handle the equipment with due care. Make the connection clear to the students: the greater responsibility they show, the greater rights they get.

Step 3:

You trust your students, just as you trust your staff. Rules are necessary as a framework, but normally you need not use them as the main argument against bad behaviour. Individual responsibility is more important than obedience.

To be able to feel individually responsible, you need self-respect. Strengthening students' self-respect is a fantastic challenge for a school to take on: without self-respect you cannot respect others. Management by coaching is a useful method here, both for teachers and school leaders.

Corridor talk/socialising

Step 1:

Your main purpose when walking around in the school is to check that good order prevails. It is also important to you to instil respect for the school leader among students and staff.

Try this:

Ask yourself: do students behave differently when there is no adult around? If so, why is that?

Step 2:

The adults at school always set good examples: they are punctual, polite and well prepared for every activity. Of course, you expect students to be the same.

Try this:

When you see bad behaviour, take the opportunity to interfere in a positive way: show personal interest; try not to be judgmental to start with. Also, do not limit yourself to interacting only to correct unsuitable behaviour. If you have developed friendly relations with students, you have a much better starting point for disciplining students in a constructive and positive direction.

Step 3:

Students and staff interact in a relaxed but respectful manner and the students feel that their teachers are supportive and genuinely interested in their welfare and personal development. Students behave properly also when there is no adult around to check them, and you see very little bullying or vandalism. Students and staff are loyal to their school.

Daily management

Conflict resolution

Step 1:

The answers to most questions can be found in policy documents. The school head is an expert on legislation.

Try this:

Ask yourself: why is this so important to me? Unruly behaviour costs time and money. Could there be other incentives for good behaviour than rules?

Step 2:

You have started by giving the staff greater freedom to carry out their work more independently. You have minimised the daily control so you can spend more time among your students and staff.

Try this:

Appeal to the good sides of human behaviour instead of putting all effort on repressing bad ones. Emphasise everybody's responsibility for the atmosphere at school, for instance by asking questions like: would you like to have yourself as a colleague or as a class mate?

Facilitate and encourage teamwork among teachers, for example by assigning a group of teachers to a bigger group of students, instead of the traditional way of assigning each teacher a set number of students in a class or form.

Be open about the damage done by violence. Actively promote the principles and methods of peaceful conflict resolution.

Step 3:

Your school is a dynamic place and you are not always in full control of what is going on, which worries you sometimes. Most cases of insubordination are dealt with before you even know about them. You are often amazed at the good ideas that emanate from staff and students and feel that you are one of the team.

Show trust! When you give the staff greater independence, you must also be generous when mistakes are made. See conflicts between colleagues as diverging opinions, not necessarily in terms of right and wrong.

Always show a positive attitude to suggestions and criticism, and let students and staff regularly evaluate your way of running the school.

Conflict resolution

Student discipline

7. The FAQs of democratic school governance

Daily the media feed us with pictures of problems in our schools: insubordination, vandalism, truancy and bullying, to mention a few. Many national school authorities are deeply worried by the statistics in the latest PISA reports on student achievement,[10] and universities complain that too many students lack the necessary knowledge for higher studies. More order and stricter rules, exclusion of unruly elements from school: these and other repressive measures are standard answers provided both by grass-roots letters to the editor and by ministerial decrees.

In a situation like this, one might wonder if it is such a wise thing to give students more power, when they so clearly cannot be responsible for such simple things as doing what the teacher tells them to do in the classroom. However, we are sure that more democracy is needed, not less. Treat students with respect, and you are more likely to be respected. True authority must be earned from those you are set to govern; it does not automatically follow from your position. But, above all, we believe strongly that respect for the individual, equity for all and the right to a voice are fundamental. School is no exception. We are also convinced that if we want democracy to stay healthy in our societies, young people must get the chance to practise it and see the benefits of it throughout their years at school.

Considering current problems with social unrest, economic restructuring and demographic changes, it is natural to worry. If we slacken the reins, what will happen then? In this chapter we try to answer, or at least comment on, some frequently asked questions concerning democratic governance.

What happens to ...

Order?

Student democracy does not imply that there will be no rules. A school is no different from the rest of society in that respect. Our personal experience is that students, regardless of age, have the same attitude to law and order as adults: *rules are necessary*! But it is easier to understand and obey rules when you have been personally active in creating them. In fact, involving the students in setting up rules for the school is one of the easiest and safest starting points on the road to democratic governance.

Results?

Many teachers and school leaders worry that the empowerment of students will make them less focused on results. Teachers have the necessary general view of what and how to teach. Yes, teachers may be experts at teaching, but learning is personal and no one knows better than individual students what is the best method of learning for them. One way of treating students respectfully is for the teacher to focus on learning, not on teaching. Modern pedagogic research also shows that this approach enhances student achievement.

Respect for teachers?

What will happen if students are given the right to criticise teachers? If students are allowed to evaluate the teaching, what will they say?

The truth is that students value the same type of teaching as the teachers themselves; competent, well-organised, friendly and engaged teachers with high expectations of their students and good leadership skills.

Of course there is a risk that students who feel offended or unfairly treated by a teacher can express their opinions in insulting ways. But with growing experience, and a more equal and mutually

10. Learning for Tomorrow's World 2003: OECD Programme for International Student Assessment.

respectful relationship with the teachers, such bad habits tend to disappear. It is rather a sense of alienation and inferiority that brings out bad behaviour.

Rights without responsibilities?

If students are treated as ignorant and irresponsible receivers of education who should be grateful for what the adult world bestows on them, it is not easy for them to know what are reasonable demands to make of teacher and school. But being given constant information and sincerely asked for an opinion based on personal judgement, students will be more inclined to act maturely. They can understand the connection between responsibilities and rights and will appreciate that they cannot claim their individual rights at the cost of somebody else's.

Underachievement and lack of motivation?

Underachievement can have so many reasons; growing up is an adventurous process where anything can happen. By giving students more influence over their situation at school, you can at least reduce some of the energy-consuming problems young persons have to face. A strict curriculum or a teacher's dictatorial choice of topics can kill a lot of youthful enthusiasm. Giving students greater freedom of choice, both of subjects to study and of learning methods, can increase motivation.

Students with learning problems?

In a democratic school, you strive for inclusion. What should be done about slow learners? Is there not a risk that they slow the whole group down? Of course there is a limit for inclusion in a democratic school environment as well, but statistics show that this risk is often exaggerated. You can see, in the PISA report mentioned above, that countries which separate slow learners from the rest at an early age do not show better results at the top end than those where age groups are held together all through the compulsory school system.

Students making wrong choices?

If we allow students a greater freedom of choice, how can we make them choose the right thing? The question is not a satisfactory one. It should be: *who should decide what is the right thing?* If a student is allowed at least some freedom of choice, the total result will probably be better. And skills like analytic and critical thinking can be learnt in many ways, not just from traditional school-books on traditional school subjects.

The time that democracy takes up?

If students are supposed to engage in democratic processes, from what subjects will the time for that be taken? Will there be less time for teaching? The answer is, of course, that practising democracy is just as important as any other subject taught in school, and that all social and learning processes will benefit from it.

Democratic school governance at work

An excellent example of democratic school governance is Roihuvuori Elementary School, Helsinki, Finland. They have come far in all the four Key Areas of EDC described in this book.

Governance, leadership and public accountability

All school work is organised in self-steering teams, which also take care of a major part of the school management. The mission statement for the school is defined by staff, students and parents together. The student council is very active and strongly supported by the staff. In negotiations with the town council, the school votes on who is going to represent the school. It has happened that the school has been represented by seven-year-olds, who need assistants who can read the official documents to them!

The method for accountability in Helsinki schools is self-evaluation, presented in written reports to the council. On the basis of the academic results, the school gets the funding for next year. Roihuvuori Elementary School has been so successful that it has got substantial sums that have been used for in-service training and international studies for staff.

Value-centred education

EDC is promoted in all school work. Values like equality and human dignity are central to all teaching, and every classroom is supposed to be a democratic learning environment. Social skills and life skills are important. Students are organised in mixed age groups, and students with learning problems or special needs are included. Teaching methods are varied and adapted to the individuals' learning styles.

Co-operation and communication, competitiveness and school self-determination

Older students serve as older brothers and sisters to the youngest ones. Many conflicts are solved by student mediators from the oldest age groups (11-12 years). The mediators are trained by the local Red Cross.

All students are given media education, free internet and e-mail access.
Parents evaluate the school annually.

Student discipline

Reflective thinking and dialogue with others is a way of learning to take responsibility and to understand how one's actions reflect on others.

Everybody is responsible for a friendly atmosphere, safety and well-being. No forms of violence, discrimination or racism are tolerated. Members of the staff decide which conflicts can be mediated and which will lead to formal sanctions.

Results of the latest school assessment

In core subjects, students' performance reached the same levels as in other schools, but they had significantly better social skills and more positive attitudes towards school than average. They seemed to be more tolerant in conflict situations and showed more initiative in their school work.

Acting together at Roihuvuori Elementary School, Helsinki, Finland.

8. Examples of good practice from around Europe

The year 2005 was launched by the Council of Europe as the European Year of Citizenship through Education, and member states were encouraged to report successful examples to the Council. Most of the examples in this chapter are taken from those reports. The role of the school leader in a process of changing values and procedures in a school cannot be overestimated.

8.1 Rights and responsibilities

Teachers often fear that students are given rights without responsibilities, while students just as often complain about having heavy responsibilities but no rights. There has to be a balance, a connection: the more responsibility you take, the more rights you will get. A mature, independent student can be allowed greater freedom to choose what and how to study. The role of the teacher becomes another.

Many schools in Norway are now experimenting with various degrees of self-governed studies. This is a report from a student in the last year of a compulsory school in Norway:

> "Next week we start with study hours. During these periods we follow a two-week schedule. It is our own responsibility to plan the work. If you are efficient, your homework will be reduced considerably. There are always many teachers present during these periods, so we can get help with all subjects. We can also work together with other students, work in the library or with computers. At our school the school year is divided in five periods, with new timetables for each period. In the middle of the day we have a long free period, when we can choose from many activities, some of them organised by students, e.g. sports or a student-managed cafeteria. This brings students together and creates a good atmosphere at school."
>
> *(From a 9th-year student at Taerudden School, Norway)*

When are children old enough to start learning about their rights and responsibilities as citizens? The answer is, of course, that they are really never too young, not even for approaching these values from a theoretical point of view. In the primary school ASBL Philomène, Brussels, they use philosophy as a means to enhance children's awareness in these matters:

> The objective is to stimulate independent, critical and analytical reflection through philosophical discussions among groups of children between 6 and 11 years, with special focus on children from underprivileged homes. The groups meet once or twice a month.
>
> The first thing the group leaders do is to raise questions among the children about attitudes and prejudices, but also about the rules and norms that surround them and which they follow, often without questioning their legitimacy. The children also practise active citizenship in concrete, everyday situations.
>
> The values that are prioritised in the philosophical discussions are mutual respect, responsibility, involvement, conscience and critical thinking. The originality of this project lies in the philosophical approach, which is neither dogmatic nor pretentious. Thinking for yourself does not mean that you repeat what somebody else has said, however good that might be, but to really digest an idea and give it substance that is meaningful to you. Another innovative quality of this approach has to do with the basis of philosophical thinking: it is not a question of whether the idea or concept you are analysing is good or bad, or even of the critical analysis itself, but of its capacity to improve the children's thinking skills and their ability to justify the reasoning that their attitudes and values are based on.

For the school leader, it is of course easier to embed democratic values if you get support from the national authorities. The ambition to strengthen democratic values seems to be strong and seen as essential in the curricula for most member states, not least in the younger nations. In Azerbaijan, for example, after a series of conferences and seminars on EDC, the syllabus for the upper secondary school subject "Man and society" (civics) has been completely changed. New themes which were not represented before (including tolerance, democratic school participation, democratic citizenship), have been included. A project of a similar type, directed at adult learners and involving a great number of governmental and non-governmental organisations, is going on in Georgia.

8.2 Active participation

Older students teaching younger pupils at Tullinge gymnasium, Sweden

The Fillip Filipovic Primary School in Belgrade, Serbia, has developed a strategy for involving all stakeholders in the development of the school. In 2004, they launched a project called School Progress Planning, led by a school development team consisting of the head, a teacher and two external consultants.

> "In order to emphasise our wish to involve the whole community in the process of improving our school, we chose the motto *'we are from your neighbourhood'*. The first seminars for all involved were held in April 2004. The task was to draw the outlines for a school progress plan.
>
> After that, we organised workshops for the separate interest groups in June to create a vision for the development of our school in a five-year perspective regarding changes in teaching, communication and atmosphere, management, organisation and infrastructure, extra-curricular activities and professional improvement of the teachers.
>
> The weakest response came from the local community, but on the whole the workshops were constructive. Parents and students were involved via teachers and parents' organisations respectively. The 300 results from the workshops were exhibited in the school hall. Based on those our plan was given its final form by the school development team."

Statistics show that the school's results have improved in all essential aspects. For instance, the involvement of the surrounding civil society has helped to meet financial needs, both through sponsoring and by stronger pressure from stakeholders on the local politicians.

A good way to start on the journey to active citizenship is often a concrete problem, for instance a dangerous traffic situation around the school:

> From the range of problems related to safety, students of the school Jovan Jovanović Zmaj from Vranje, Serbia, selected the problem of children endangered in traffic. They agreed that the best possible measure for solving this problem was placing traffic lights in the vicinity of the school. In order to get support and adequate help, they organised meetings with representatives of the traffic police and with the Directorate for Construction and International Organisation, UNDP, as potential financier. In order to raise awareness about the problem to the general public the students addressed the media and made appearances on a local TV show together with the representatives of the traffic police and the Directorate for Construction. The action of the students resulted in traffic lights in the vicinity of all schools and kindergartens in Vranje.

The important lesson that the students at Jovan Jovanović School have learned is that their opinion matters and is taken into account.

Sometimes, but not often, the initiative to participate comes from other parts of society. This was the case in Zadar County, Croatia, where the police force wanted to change young people's attitudes to the police and invited schools to join in a project where the object was to change the perception of police as a repressive force to that of a community-based service, acting in the civil society, helping to build a safer environment, where democratic values and citizens' rights are respected.

The project was strongly supported by the Croatian Ministry of Education, the Police Academy of Zagreb and various NGOs, but was met at first with no or little response from the heads of the schools. In the end, however, 8 schools out of 14 accepted the invitation. The result of the project was not only better relations between the local police forces and the students involved, there were some positive side-effects as well. Teachers and police officers found out about themselves that "our images about young people were very different, and also the readiness to hear what young people would think and decide. We all have to become better at developing mutual trust, developing teaching and learning skills in new methodologies, making both professions trained and competent in interactive, participatory methods of work with young people."

(Maja Uzelac, one of the project leaders)

The evaluation of the one-year project also indicated a better awareness of the problems in society, better relations between colleagues, students and others, more trust, a more relaxed approach and better understanding of youth problems, a friendlier learning environment with students more interested in learning, and more effective teaching.

The two examples above clearly show the critical role of the school leader in all kinds of school development. Regardless of where the initiative comes from, very little long-term improvement is possible without the whole-hearted commitment of the head of the school.

8.3 Valuing diversity

Students at Tullinge gymnasium, Sweden

Two examples from Portugal:

The MUS-E project in Évora is part of the international network MUS-E – artists in school Programme, founded by Maestro Yehudi Menuhin over a decade ago. MUS-E Évora has been focusing its activities in Cruz da Picada Elementary School, working towards the integration of ethnic minorities into society through the practice of the arts at school, struggling against social and cultural exclusion.

The method used in the particular *"training in action"* process of MUS-E artists is to work with both children and teachers from an interdisciplinary perspective, primarily with drama, dance and the visual arts.

In the last academic year (2004-05), that intensive work resulted in a "Feira do Imaginário" (Fair of fantastic imagery), which was held in different public spaces throughout the city. This fair of extraordinary *"out of this world things"* was created and given life by children and artists, with the help of the PIM-Teatro Theatre Group and EPRE (Évora Detention Centre), and also teachers and families. In such a peculiar fair one could find just about anything for sale: magical potions, flying hats and talking books. There, one could encounter musicians, jugglers, acrobats, and monsters. In an area with many ethnic minorities and underprivileged children, fairy tales and imagination was a field in which everybody could participate on an equal level.

The interdisciplinary and artistic character of the project created new networks in the local community and partnerships with local cultural and social agents and institutions.

"Pegadas de Todas as Cores – Footprints of All Colours" is a project designed by the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS), an international NGO whose mission is to accompany, serve and advocate for refugees and displaced persons all over the world. In Portugal, JRS provides a number of services for refugees and economic migrants.

> "In the course of our work with migrants, we have realised that it would be very fruitful to share our experience(s) with the young people in the schools. This is how *Footprints of All Colours* began, with funding from the Portuguese High Commissariat for Immigration and Ethnic Minorities (ACIME). We organise one- to one-and-a-half-hour sessions for small groups (30 to 40 pupils, their teachers and other school staff) to discuss the topic of migration. We visit mostly schools for Years 5 to 9, but also occasionally secondary schools (Years 10-12), in the Districts of Lisbon and Setúbal.
>
> This project addresses the issues of migration, multicultural societies and inclusion, which are all relevant in the field of EDC. It aims to raise awareness of these issues and to foster attitudes of openness, respect and solidarity towards migrant workers. Issues are dealt with both from a political and a personal perspective – for example, the impact of immigration into Portugal is discussed not only on the level of government policies and macro-social developments, but also on a personal and family level. The option for a methodological approach involving life stories and personal testimonies is key to the motivation of pupils and to drawing them closer to the reality of migrations. Pupils are more interested in the content input of the session once they feel they can relate to the actual experience of being a migrant."
>
> *(Report from Rita Raimundo, JRS Lisbon)*

A growing problem in our multi-cultural society is the kind of everyday racism or discrimination we see all too often on buses, in supermarkets, in public places and in classrooms.

The Austrian organisation ZARA has developed a programme for practical training in "civilian courage" (*Zivilcourage* in German) based on the firm belief that we all can and must take action against this type of discrimination, intervening wherever we see it. This is the only way to change attitudes in society.

> ZARA *(Zivilcourageworkshops an Schulen)* has developed a concept of workshops to help you go from wanting to do something to actually doing it. ZARA has worked with students for five years. Their method has three steps:
>
> 1. Group discussions to identify discrimination, based on the student's own experiences.
> 2. Role play for better insight, empathy and courage.
> 3. Development of strategies: What can I do when I see somebody being treated badly on a bus? What can happen if I try to act as a hero? What if the other passengers on the bus are racists too?

Through this programme many students have got the courage to take small but important steps in the right direction. It is not so much about doing the very best thing in an unpleasant public situation but simply doing something, as an act of solidarity.[11]

8.4 Teaching democracy and active citizenship

In most examples of good practice we have found common traits in the choice of teaching methods, all focusing more on learning than on teaching:

- **Role play:** students choose or are given roles in scenarios like creating an ideal society, a mock parliament or an ethical dilemma.
- **Open-ended questions:** What is best for the future of our city? Exploiting the natural resources or protecting the environment? Building the motorway or preserving the bird sanctuary?
- **Learning based on actual problems:** How can the way to school become safer? Why was Benjamin killed, and what can we do to prevent such a thing from happening again? (From a Norwegian example of racist violence).

11. For more information on these and other examples of good practice, see publication No DGIV/EDU/CAHCIT (2006) 18, Ad hoc Committee of Experts for the European Year of Citizenship Through Education (CAHCIT).

- **Co-operation with the outside world:** NGOs, sponsors, local enterprises, experts and media. The co-operation can work both ways. Students can help local authorities or small enterprises with surveys, measuring acidity in lakes or designing homepages or brochures for small local organisations.
- **Openness:** arranging exhibitions, shows and fairs, entering competitions, inviting the media to school.

Teaching like this takes courage, since the outcome is not given. It may well happen sometimes that the role play ends in mild chaos or in something completely unrealistic; or that the students end up having even more unanswered questions than they had at the beginning; or that the local authorities won't take their suggestions seriously.

One way of strengthening teachers' courage is to provide them with some solid theoretical justification for testing new teaching methods. In an EU/Comenius project, involving several countries, the Danish philosopher Finn Thorbjörn Hansen from the Danish Pedagogical University of Copenhagen developed a planning model for teaching active citizenship. The ACTIVE project is an excellent example of what can be achieved in this field:

ACTIVE – Active Citizenship through Interpersonal Value-related Education[12]

Background

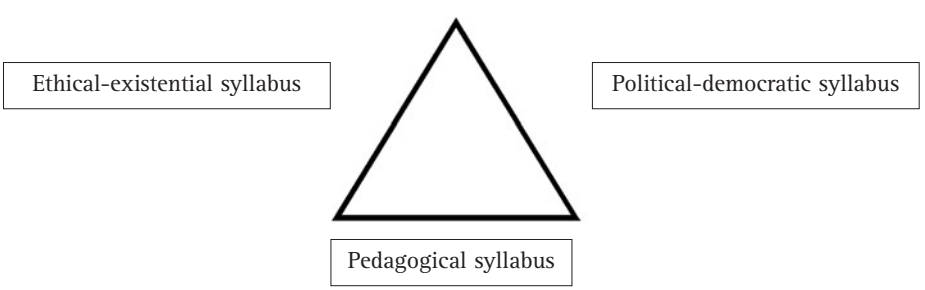
The new European context has also brought about new challenges such as: democracy as a common system of government for all Europeans; European citizenship; problems related to social cohesion and civic participation; the common market; information technology; young people's mobility; and the learning society. Because of this there will be a need for citizens who are responsible for the economic, social and cultural development of the whole of Europe. There is still a need to prepare young people for responsible participation in society at a local, regional, national, European and global level. In addition to this, a new European context creates new identity problems.

The idea of citizenship implies cultural identity. Therefore for people to start thinking of themselves as citizens, it is necessary for them to be aware who they are and which communities they belong to. Within Europe there is great diversity of teachers' work. There is a possibility to share teachers' experiences and determine educational needs in order to create the new and common approach to citizenship education.

Methodology, tools and technology used/to be used

One way to answer those questions has been for the ACTIVE project partners to develop a common framework for this teacher training course in all countries. This framework is illustrated by a triangle which consists of three corners or approaches to active citizenship:

1) *pedagogical-professional* (content)
2) *political-democratic* (process/form)
3) *ethical-existential* (attitude/values)



The last approach is specifically important for the ACTIVE project. It deals explicitly with the importance of "life values" to motivate young people for active citizenship and is not to be confused with the "democratic values and political virtues" or good professional competences in the "curriculum of the different subjects". This third approach is seen as an innovation in the thinking of Education for Active Citizenship, which to our knowledge has not been done before.

12. For more information, see the Comenius catalogue: "Teach Active – Learn Active" – reference number DK-2007-001.

Planning model

How can the teacher teach active citizenship in the classroom by only being in the classroom? This was one of questions raised during the project period. As an answer to this, ACTIVE has produced the following planning model for the teacher. By using this model the teacher will be able to challenge the pupils to use learning resources outside the classroom and to be active learners.

	IN the classroom	*OUTSIDE* the classroom
1. Pedagogical dimension		
2. Social dimension		
3. Political dimension		
4. Value/ethical dimension		

(Developed by Finn Thorbjørn Hansen, DPU, in co-operation with ACTIVE)

8.5 Students involved in evaluating teaching and learning

School Councils UK is running the Deutsche Bank-funded *London Secondary Schools Citizenship and Research Project* (LSSCARP) which aims actively to involve students as classroom researchers in teaching and learning. Teachers negotiate with their student observer (who is not normally a member of that class) what aspects of the lesson are to be monitored. This may involve mapping the teacher's movements around the class; how much time he/she devotes to the boys in the class rather than the girls; how many negative comments he/she makes as opposed to positive. The student may even observe a member of the class whose behaviour is a problem, and gauge for how much (or little) of the lesson that student is on task. Early assessments of LSSCARP suggest that student observation is making a huge contribution to improving teaching and learning in those schools.

8.6 Finally

... as the school leader, you must be very clear: democratic governance does not mean that you abdicate from your leadership. On the contrary, in this process of change you must:

- give strong leadership. Not strong in the sense of authority, but in terms of strength of purpose, of holding to your democratic values even when things get difficult. Tenacity and humility in a leader call for greater strength of character than the exercise of power;
- support and encourage your teachers, not only in words, but also in action. Show interest, be present, take active part in the work whenever you can;
- provide teachers with good in-service training, both theoretical and practical. Teachers need good orientation in the social, cultural and economic development of our society, locally and internationally. They also need practice without fear of failure;
- take every opportunity to explain to parents and local stakeholders why you are using new methods. Also make sure that the good results, when you start getting them, become known to all interested parties (which normally means the whole of society – practically everybody has an opinion about schools, teaching and school governance);
- take care of your own in-service training. Why not reserve a minimum of three hours a week for personal development? Not so much in management skills as in systematic studies of the surrounding world, as seen in the media, in the latest research, in the political and cultural life around you. Thinking takes time, and as a leader you must give yourself time to think ahead;
- prove that you are right! Your own firm belief is not enough to convince the stakeholders, nor is your eloquence. Evaluate the progress of your school systematically, gather statistics and other evidence and be honest. Don't be afraid to account for setbacks. As we said before, the road to true democratic governance may be bumpy, but it is the only way to go!

"As for the best leaders, the people never notice their existence.

- The next the people praise.
- The next the people fear.
- The last the people hate.
- When the best leader's job is done, the people say, 'We did it ourselves'."

Lao Tse

9. Democratic governance: patterns and common features

If the previous chapter took us through the swamp of problems and anxieties, this last part of the tool allows us to look up towards a sunny democratic horizon with hope and optimism! The features described in this chapter are indicators of democratic practice within the governance of a school. But they are more than that. Where they are present they are not merely symptoms. At the same time their presence further helps to spread the democratic processes at work: democracy actually feeds on itself and on the outcomes that it generates. Thus the more teachers are trusted to make appropriate and just decisions, the more they will do so: and so the more they can and will be trusted. The same happens with students, of course, and with all the participants who find themselves working together in a variety of combinations and in all kinds of settings, formal and informal.

After reading this chapter you may want to revisit Chapter 6, which described how you can build steps to move your school forward along the democratic path. The patterns and common traits discussed here can be seen as milestones or signposts along that path – except that with democracy, if a signpost is missing, you can build and plant your own, and it will still help you along the way! For example, if democracy is promoted within a school, there will soon be a demand from students to be given a voice through some kind of student council or school parliament (see below). But you don't have to wait for that to happen: you can set one up yourself (or, rather, actively encourage the students to do so). It will probably not work very well at first, but it will show the students immediately that they are respected and trusted. With practice and experience, it will develop and improve over time: and, all the time, in learning to use their council effectively the students will develop the democratic skills that will in turn generate other democratic developments and help them to make a success of them.

That is how democracy grows – exponentially. One development gives rise to another, which in turn creates another. So you don't have to make changes in a particular order to build it. You can just seize opportunities to spread it where you find them.

Formal/structural settings

Decentralisation of authority to the school

In the best form of governance, national or regional government would take only the broadest strategic decisions, leaving schools individually to decide the best way for them of implementing national strategy. In the Europe of the early 21st century it seems that politicians talk a great deal about decentralisation but seldom practise it. Schools are left with the problem of dealing – hopefully in a democratic manner (see below) – with a plethora of laws and regulations that constrain them.

Governing methods are object-orientated (goals, not rules or instructions)

In a school that is operating democratically, decisions are taken for the sake of the students and other stakeholders: the aim is to ensure that the institution is the best it can be for those for whom it exists. The way in which it is governed reflects this, and decision-making structures are designed to achieve this, not to protect the personal power or position of the head (or anyone else), nor to follow the rules or instructions of higher authority. Indeed, if that higher authority seems to be acting against the school's best interests (for example, by starving it of resources at a time of reduced funding), the methods of governance may have to be redesigned in order to mitigate the effects and limit the damage caused.

Teacher empowerment through formal committees or interest groups

The involvement of teachers in decision-making doesn't always have to be achieved through formal meetings, and decisions do not have to be taken by vote. In a school, where the participants tend to be committed to shared principles and goals, a consensus is frequently reached simply by free discussion. Teachers don't have to be summoned to numerous meetings in order to spread democracy: on the contrary, a proliferation of meetings can be demoralising and counter-productive. Often a working party can be set up to meet as many (or as few) times as are necessary to decide on a policy, after which it disbands. Its membership might be self-selecting: those who have an interest in the outcome are likely to volunteer, though it may be your job to ensure that there is a balance of opinion within the group and that good practice is observed: in other words, that minorities are represented, and that openness and equity are central to the process of discussion. Governments have a way of setting up working groups to recommend a national policy and then disagree with the outcome, so they ignore it. It is unwise for a school head to respond in the same way!

Student empowerment through formal committees or interest groups

It is hard to imagine a democratic school without some kind of formal council or parliament for students at the centre of the democracy. This needs to be fairly and transparently elected if it is to have credibility with the student body (there is plenty of advice available on how to set this up: see the list of resources). There are many other opportunities for involving students in policy and decision-making, not merely in planning student activities (such as celebrations and festivals) but in matters central to their education: in committees that deal with food; with discipline; with academic choices. They can also be involved in important activities that in the past have been regarded as exclusively for teachers but are now being found to be greatly improved where students are involved; in the recruitment and appointment of teachers; even in observation of teaching and spreading good practice.

Informal settings

Trust and openness as dominant attitudes

In a school that is truly on the way to becoming democratic there is a feel throughout; in the classrooms; in meetings; in the corridors. Trust and openness reproduce themselves as surely as fear and intimidation breed more of the same in a traditional authoritarian climate. If you don't think that you can feel that ethos of trust around your school, find a way (one of our examples, or anything else that occurs to you) in which you can demonstrate how your students (or your teachers) are trusted. Start in a small way: you don't need to be too ambitious at first, and in any case people need opportunities to learn to use trust, to take and genuinely exercise responsibility. Once trust is given, it is rare that it is not amply repaid.

Active participation is encouraged and rewarded

When students repay the trust that has been given to them, a democratic school ensures that they are both encouraged and rewarded. Particularly if you are taking your first steps in this direction, you will want to publicise and applaud what the students have achieved. When they have done well in small things, you will also want (again in a public way) to trust them with weightier matters.

There are visible rewards for students who get actively involved. In schools and countries that have a tradition of giving formal authority to older students through a system of "prefects" or "monitors", status is thus conferred on them in a structural way. (Of course, such systems can be quite the opposite of democratic, rather reinforcing a traditional form of authoritarianism. Indeed, in the UK, where prefect systems are common, it is probably a minority of schools that operate them democratically). But the rewards for active participation do not have to be part of a system: students who take the lead in participation tend to become highly visible and gain significant respect from their peers – because they are seen to earn it. If you additionally take the opportunity of publicly acknowledging their contribution in the school's name, they will feel richly rewarded.

NGOs are readily invited into school and are actively involved

A democratic school sees active engagement with other organisations as a positive opportunity. Thus parents' organisations, cultural institutions and local enterprise are all invited into school in order both to contribute to the education of the students and to benefit in their turn from this association. A democratic school is not defensive. It does not feel threatened by other organisations coming in and getting involved in it, and does not seek to set boundaries. Inviting NGOs into school is a good way of starting to break down barriers.

Students are encouraged to publish their views

A newspaper or magazine that is written and produced by the students can release an enormous amount of energy. Allowing or positively encouraging it is also a good way of demonstrating your trust in them, since anyone can see that it takes some courage! What will happen if they criticise teachers? Or the school? Or the government? Or even (unthinkably!) the head? It may be necessary to agree limits - but such discussion provides an enormous opportunity to learn the democratic skills of negotiation and compromise, and even to develop an appreciation of what free speech means within a democratic, tolerant and diverse society.

Students involved in counselling, mediation and support

As counselling – and, apparently, the need for it – becomes increasingly common in schools across Europe, young people appear eager to undergo basic training in order to act as informal advisers, listeners, supporters and even, in cases of conflict, mediators. Those who become peer supporters or peer mentors (the terms most commonly used in the UK) certainly learn as much from the activity as those fellow students whom they help. For the school it is another opportunity to give responsibility to its students and trust them to provide a vital service within its young community. This can be a powerful and highly advanced form of democratic participation.

Recreation areas are shared between staff and students

This is an example of a potentially contentious issue, yet it is again one where consideration and negotiation could provide valuable democratic learning experiences. The staff are employees and have a moral and legal right to rest periods. Should they have a separate area in which to take a break? Is the status of students entirely different?

1998 research linking school councils and improved behaviour in the UK involved a school where there was no separate area for staff to get away from students: but it was not clear whether this was a decision that stemmed from a democratic ethos. On the contrary, it appeared to follow a service model: teachers were there for students, so should be available to them at all times, not hiding in a private area.

Davies, L (1998), *School Councils and Pupil Exclusions*, Centre for International Education and Research, University of Birmingham (published by School Councils UK: www.schoolcouncils.org).

If the school is not ready for a discussion of shared areas, or even for a fruitful negotiation of when teachers are available to students and when they aren't, perhaps you could consider shared activities. In some schools teachers and students go running or use gymnasium equipment together: whatever their age, they have the same interest in improving their fitness and stamina, so why not do it together, learn from one another and encourage one another? It is a situation free of hierarchy and authority and is thus a pleasant way of spreading a democratic feel in school.

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10. Conclusion

> "Democracy is not a goal, it is a path; it is not attainment, but a process ... When we grasp this and begin to live democracy, then only shall we have democracy."
>
> (Mary Parker Follett (1918), *The New State*, p 58)

By now you should have gained a picture of the possible paths that democracy might take in your school, and you will have recognised some elements of school life described here: these may suggest the stages that your school is currently at, in the various contexts that have been described. This manual describes just a few symptoms of democracy that can be spotted growing in a school. Some features actively develop the democracy in their operation: in other cases it is the discussion and negotiation about them that will increase the understanding and practice of democracy in the school.

No change in schools happens immediately: everything needs time to take root. It always seems to take ages, and you cannot change everything at once. But you can keep moving forward in areas where you feel you can make some progress. And, when you look back after only a year or two, you may be astonished when you realise just how far your school has moved. Democratic change tends to be sustainable: it gets embedded, and grows, as long as you keep working consistently at it.

It's the right way to go, but it can be hard work. The process of analysis, planning and implementation needs to be repeated – constantly. So, if analysing Key Areas – either ours or your own – by means of the grids in Chapter 4, identifying underlying Values and Behaviours (Chapter 5) and then planning a step-by-step development (Chapter 6) begins to appear daunting, you should not lose heart. You may not feel able to keep working at it all the time. You may want instead to step outside that methodical process, look at one of the examples in this or the preceding chapter and see if you can promote that in your school. A "quick win" in a limited, self-contained area might increase your confidence – and prove that you are serious.

> The Council of Europe has produced other material on EDC which you may want to read for further information or comparison. For example, similar work is going on in universities. For further reading, see the list of resources.

Spreading democracy in a school can be stressful. By its very nature democracy challenges old hierarchies and authorities, and the conflicts that may emerge can be hurtful and wearing. You will need to be strong: not (as we wrote earlier) strong in the sense of being inflexible and authoritarian, but strong in the courage it needs to accept the reality of disagreement, to keep an open mind and to seek consensus through negotiation and compromise. If you allow yourself to be driven by the Three Principles of EDC you will not make wrong decisions: and if you bear in mind the fact that you are travelling by steps along a journey to democracy that never really ends (as Mary Parker Follett wrote in 1918), we hope you will find patience too!

You don't have to feel on you own. Democracy involves partnerships – so work with your partners and lean on them when you need to. Democracy is still growing throughout Europe, so you are part of a large and increasing group in which you can find friends and allies. Look for them, because as a democrat and democratiser you are part of the mainstream, not out on the fringe. And every step forward in the school will bring rewards, both personal and institutional, which will certainly serve to encourage you and spur you on to further efforts. The improvements in the school and its ethos will be tangible. So you can look forward to fun and a degree of satisfaction which will far outweigh the challenging times.

The difficulties are significant, but the rewards are immense. The cause of democracy is the right one! We hope this manual will help you on that journey, and we wish you both the courage that will be needed and the success that will come.

Good luck!

Appendix I: The Planning Grid

EDC Key Area – or your own chosen area:	What stage do you estimate your school is at in relation to the three EDC Principles?	EDC Principles		
		Rights and responsibilities (Stage 1, 2, 3 or 4?)	**Active participation** (Stage 1, 2, 3 or 4?)	**Valuing diversity** (Stage 1, 2, 3 or 4?)
	From the point of view of: Leadership	stage	stage	stage
		(briefly describe features)	*(features)*	*(features)*
	Students	Stage	Stage	Stage
		(features)	*(features)*	*(features)*
	Teachers	Stage	Stage	Stage
		(features)	*(features)*	*(features)*
	Parents	Stage	Stage	Stage
		(features)	*(features)*	*(features)*
	Community	Stage	Stage	Stage
		(features)	(features)	(features)

	Rights and responsibilities	Active participation	Valuing diversity
Action to take for next stage			
Who takes it?			
Measures/indicators of success			
To be reviewed when?			
Who reviews it?			
Result of review			

Appendix II

The purpose of this appendix is to outline the book's context – the educational policies of recent years and the Council of Europe's work on Education for Democratic Citizenship (EDC).

The book's use and implications will be clearer if the reader **takes account of the European and worldwide educational context**, bears in mind the progress made in the Council of Europe's work on EDC and has references for **other tools and documents** providing further information on EDC policies and practices.

Educational reform: a challenge for democracy

Many educational reforms have been carried out in Europe and worldwide over the past few years. The social problems currently affecting most countries, such as steadily growing unemployment, rising violence and social inequalities, have prompted national leaders to devise reforms conducive to better-quality teaching, a better match between training, employment and society's needs, and value-oriented education to teach individuals to live as members of society.

> At the 19th session of the *Standing Conference of European Ministers of Education* (Kristiansand, Norway, 1997), the ministers agreed on the importance of the "search for a better balance between the aims and objectives of secondary education, equal status of the academic and vocational areas, the acquisition of knowledge and skills and the training of citizens for democratic society".

The new educational policies share an emphasis on the will to achieve greater efficiency at a lesser cost and to combine this cost-effectiveness with promoting democratic values. They revolve around four main objectives:

- upgrading acquired skills to meet economic requirements;
- education for citizenship and for respect for human rights;
- developing educational partnerships to foster co-operation between schools, families and various organisations;
- the use of new information and communication technologies (NICTs) in education.

Education for citizenship and developing educational partnerships are particularly important objectives in Europe.

In recent years European countries have tended to reshape their educational policies around the concept of diversity. Educational reform focuses on **the social, cultural, religious and linguistic diversity** now characteristic of European countries in order to meet the challenge of ensuring **social cohesion**.

This recognition of the **multicultural side of European societies** and the attention paid to it in the educational sphere reflect a concern to build democratic societies respectful of diversity by educating citizens accordingly from their earliest years. One purpose of this type of education is to combat the problems associated with dropping out of school, exclusion from society and stigmatisation.

> At the 19th session of the *Standing Conference of European Ministers of Education* (quoted above), the ministers stated their conviction that education can meet the challenges currently facing European societies by, for instance, "reaffirming the value of cultural diversity as an accepted source of common richness, and teaching ethical values based on respect for the rights of others, tolerance and solidarity, [and] the fight against racism and anti-Semitism".

Historically, **children have been granted** steadily increasing **importance as active participants in their own education**. They used to be confined to passive status, but are increasingly required to take an active part in learning. Listening to young people, their aspirations and their feelings at

school and assigning them a share of responsibility for the learning process are comparatively recent developments, showing that educational policies are constantly progressing towards educating children to participate and assume responsibility, and step by step towards citizenship.

> The *International Convention on the Rights of the Child* (1989), signed and ratified by 191 countries, provides in Article 29 that "the education of the child shall be directed to the development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential". The drafting and adoption of this convention marked a great step forward in terms of children's position in society.

For more than two decades the role of education in building a more just and more democratic society demonstrating greater respect for human rights has lain at the heart of theoretical discussions and research on education. Political and social changes in European societies have had a strong impact on the sense of citizenship, and the idea of education for democratic citizenship has gradually come to the fore.

> At the first informal *Conference on Education for Democratic Development and Stability in South-East Europe* (Strasbourg, 1999), the Ministers of Education of South-East Europe said they were "convinced that education and educational co-operation have a fundamental role to play in the development of tolerance, mutual understanding and a common awareness both within and between the member states in the European context".

The idea of **involving families in the educational process**, which was first put into practice in "alternative" schools, is gaining ground in educational reforms, which increasingly emphasise the importance of closer ties between school and family. This can help to draw some families out of their isolation and can therefore have a positive impact on children's relationship with school. It is a pointer to the importance of the school environment in educational processes.

> At the 20th session of the *Standing Conference of European Ministers of Education* (Krakow, Poland, 2000) it was agreed that education for democratic citizenship "promotes and is promoted by (...) a whole-school approach, in terms of school ethos, learning and teaching methods and the participation of pupils, students, educational staff and parents in decision making and, as far as possible, in determining the formal and informal curriculum".

In Europe in recent years, **central government powers** in the educational sphere **have been devolved** to the regions or to educational establishments. Devolution gives schools more room for manoeuvre, increasing their scope for forging closer ties with the educational community in the broad sense and allowing them to practise real participatory democracy in their decision-making processes.

Reinforced by this devolution, parental involvement helps to initiate dialogue and promote participation by the entire educational community in children's education.

Educational reform in Europe and worldwide thus demonstrates **the role of school as a lever for building democracy**.

However, according to C Bîrzéa and the All-European Study on Education for Democratic Citizenship Policies,[13] **there remains a substantial gap between the policies adopted and actual practice**. Furthermore, recent studies apparently show that **young Europeans are losing interest in politics and becoming less involved in civil society**.

That is why the Council of Europe is now working on **supplying tools to local players** so that they can directly carry out activities aimed at building a more democratic school environment.

Action at local level helps to **bridge the substantial gap between policy and actual practice**. Moreover, educational players acting at local level can directly assess the results of their work and **gear their activities to the context in which they operate**.

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13. C. Bîrzéa, "Part 1: EDC Policies in Europe – A Synthesis", *All-European Study on Education for Democratic Citizenship Policies*, Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 2004, ISBN 92-871-5608-5.

That is the purpose of this book. It provides school leaders, administrators, principals and teachers with resources to promote democratic governance in their schools.

From policy-making to practice in Education for Democratic Citizenship (EDC) at the Council of Europe

Since it was set up in 1949, the Council of Europe has worked to achieve a closer union between its members and to strengthen democracy and respect for human rights in Europe.

Education is a key sphere of activity in achieving these aims and is recognised as one of the pillars of democracy: the Council of Europe regards democracy as a learning process and pursues its educational policies and activities with a view to building a more democratic European society.

The Council's educational and cultural activities are framed by the European Cultural Convention, adopted in 1954 and signed by 48 countries to date.

Keen to make education a vehicle for training active and responsible citizens, the Council of Europe designed the **Education for Democratic Citizenship (EDC) project**, which was officially launched in 1997. The purpose of the project was to **determine what values and skills individuals needed to have in order to become active citizens, and how they could acquire them and pass them on to others.**

Education for democratic citizenship is a **response to the major challenges confronting our societies**, including the rise of intolerance and racism in Europe, the growth of individualism, discrimination and social exclusion, low involvement in politics and civic affairs and lack of confidence in democratic institutions.

The project took place in two phases: the first (1997 to 2000) served to define EDC concepts clearly, develop strategies and outline a theoretical basis for EDC policies.

The second phase (2001 to 2004) used these results to develop political standards for EDC and to get them adopted and put into practice in the member states. The experts also looked into practical difficulties in the various member states.

Lastly, setting up a pan-European network of national co-ordinators gave the Council of Europe a clearer picture of the situation and allowed it to take more appropriate action in each member country. It also facilitated the task of piloting and co-ordinating the project work at more local level.

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe proclaimed 2005 European Year of Citizenship through Education, demonstrating that **EDC was at the core of Europe's concerns.**

What is EDC?

Education for democratic citizenship is a set of practices and activities designed to prepare people to live in a democratic society by ensuring that they actively exercise their rights and responsibilities. It includes human rights education, civic education and intercultural education.

EDC is very closely linked to the idea of participation, since no one can pass on democratic citizenship without practising it.

Outlining the different stages in the Council of Europe's work in this area will make it easier to understand how it started and how the process developed.

Education for Democratic Citizenship emerged in the early 1990s as a priority in education at the Council of Europe and made a strong imprint on its activities, particularly through five landmark events:

(1) *The second Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe Member States* (Strasbourg, 10-11 October 1997) declared **Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education priority areas for the Council of Europe.** That was when the EDC project was officially launched.

The first Summit of Heads of State and Government, held in Vienna in 1993, had focused on the issue of minorities, which was emerging as a key concern in the 1990s, and had already strongly emphasised the need for pluralist political management of society, the difficulty of doing this and the need for measures to enforce respect for diversity.

(2) *The Budapest Declaration on the rights and responsibilities of citizens* (Declaration and programme on Education for Democratic Citizenship, based on the rights and responsibilities of citizens – adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 7 May 1999 at its 104th session). This declaration **recognises the cardinal role of EDC in building a democratic society distinguished by social cohesion and respect for diversity**. The Committee of Ministers declared that EDC:

"ii. equips men and women to play an active part in public life and shape in a responsible way their own destiny and that of their society;

iii. aims to instil a culture of human rights which will ensure full respect for those rights and understanding of [the] responsibilities that flow from them;

iv. prepares people to live in a multicultural society and to deal with difference knowledgeably, sensibly, tolerantly and morally;

v. strengthens social cohesion, mutual understanding and solidarity".

(3) *The resolution of the Conference of European Ministers of Education* adopted in Krakow in 2000 stresses the **importance of a democratic learning environment, of partnerships between stakeholders in the educational community and of pupil participation**.

(4) *Recommendation (2002)12 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on education for democratic citizenship* (adopted on 16 October 2002 at the Ministers' Deputies' 802nd meeting) reasserts the **fundamental importance of developing education for democratic citizenship for the security, stability and development of democratic societies**.

The Committee of Ministers declares:

"that education for democratic citizenship is a factor for social cohesion, mutual understanding, intercultural and inter-religious dialogue, and solidarity, that it contributes to promoting the principle of equality between women and men, and that it encourages the establishment of harmonious and peaceful relations within and among peoples, as well as the defence and development of democratic society and culture; that education for democratic citizenship, in its broadest possible sense, should be at the heart of the reform and implementation of educational policies".

(5) *Declaration by the European Ministers of Education on intercultural education in the new European context* (Standing Conference of European Ministers of Education, 21st session, Athens, Greece, 10-12 November 2003). This declaration introduces the idea of the **importance of democratic governance in schools**. The European ministers said that the Council of Europe should:

"support initiatives and experiments with democratic governance in schools, particularly through partnership, youth participation and co-operation with communities, parents and civil society; identify models of good practice in the areas of democratic governance and quality assurance in schools and prepare their potential users to be able to make use of them".

These official texts demonstrate the **substantial and steady progress made in recognising the importance of Education for Democratic Citizenship** for the society of the future and discussing ways and means, methods and good practices for implementing EDC.

Learning about democracy is now a stated objective in education systems in all European countries; EDC is either expressly regarded as an educational objective or incorporated into curricula as a specific item. Thus, despite marked differences between their education systems and views on education, all the member states now recognise the importance of education for democratic citizenship.

The EDC project is actively supported by the European Union, which co-operates in developing it. It also lies at the heart of partnerships with other international organisations: UNESCO, UNICEF, OECD and OSCE.

On the basis of these political decisions, the Council of Europe is working to implement EDC in the member countries by

- holding seminars and conferences;
- organising activities in the member states through schools and/or NGOs;
- devising tools such as the EDC pack, which contains handbooks for education professionals;
- organising the European Year of Citizenship through Education (in 2005).

This book, one of the tools in the EDC pack, has been produced by the Council of Europe to provide support and suggest methods to anyone involved in school governance in Europe who wishes to make his or her school more democratic.

It is part of the Council of Europe's ongoing work around the Education for Democratic Citizenship project and European Year of Citizenship through Education 2005. With its focus on governance, it is a tool for direct action in schools, while at the same time reflecting years of careful political thinking and a wide range of practical experience in European countries over the past nine years.

Education for Democratic Citizenship and Democratic Governance

The importance of **democratic governance** soon became apparent in the project on Education for Democratic Citizenship. The slogan **"learning and living democracy"** points to the need to experience democracy at school in order to internalise democratic values and practices.

At the Standing Conference of European Ministers of Education (Athens, Greece, 10-12 November 2003) a series of open questions was drawn up for the attention of policy makers. Three support systems were identified for achieving intercultural education objectives: curricula, school governance and management, and teacher training. **School governance is the first decision-making level with an impact on pupils' day-to-day lives.**

If schools want to educate young people for democratic citizenship, the first step seems to be to build a democratic school. It is surely illusory to seek to pass on values in an environment that does not function according to those values. A school practising democratic governance generates an environment characterised by democratic values, in which children will be at home from their earliest years. This will enable them to internalise democratic citizenship values and practices naturally and spontaneously.

Since 2004 the Council of Europe has been planning to produce a manual on democratic governance in schools.

In January 2006 it held the first meeting of the working group on democratic governance, which initiated this book. The experts attending the meeting defined the concepts of democratic governance and drew up an outline of the book, designed as a tool for schools.

Other tools for practising EDC – at local level

As part of the European Year of Citizenship through Education, the Council of Europe wants to reach politicians, teachers and all others working with children and in education (whether formal or non-formal). It is therefore developing several working aids for people interested in EDC.

The EDC pack

One of these working aids, the **EDC pack** (in preparation), consists of a series of documents and tools for devising and implementing education for democratic citizenship and human rights education policies and practices in all sectors of education.

The following tools are available:

- Tool 1: **Tool on Key Issues for EDC Policy**

Aimed at decision-makers at all levels of the education system. Contains the "Glossary of Terms for Education for Democratic Citizenship", the "All-European Study on Policies for Education for Democratic Citizenship" and the "Tool on key issues for education for democratic citizenship".

- Tool 2: **Tool on Democratic Governance in Education**

Aimed at all policy-makers, education leaders and administrators, school leaders and principals, student, parent and community organisations. Consists of the book you are holding and the publication Democratic School Participation and Civic Attitudes among European Adolescents: Analysis of Data from the IEA Civic Education Study.

- Tool 3: **Tool on Teacher Training for EDC and HRE**

Produced for teacher trainers, teachers, school leaders and principals, curriculum co-ordinators, NGOs and community organisations. A manual entitled Tool on Teacher Training for Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education.

- Tool 4: **Tool on Quality Assurance in EDC**

Produced for school leaders and principals, curriculum co-ordinators, teachers, teacher trainers and education leaders and administrators. Based on the results of the Quality Assurance and School Development Project run by the Centre for Education Policy Studies (CEPS).

Other publications: educational material

- **COMPASS manual on human rights education**

COMPASS has been produced as part of the Human Rights Education Youth Programme run by the Council of Europe Directorate of Youth and Sport. The programme aims to put human rights at the centre of youth work and thus help bring human rights education into the main stream.

- **Training kits – T-kits**

These are thematic publications written by experienced youth trainers and other experts. They are easy-to-use handbooks for use in training and study sessions. T-kits are produced by the Youth Directorate.

- **European Charter for Democratic Schools without Violence**

On the Council of Europe's initiative, young people from across Europe have drawn up the European Charter for Democratic Schools without Violence on the basis of the fundamental values and principles shared by all Europeans, especially those set out in the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

- **DOMINO**

A manual to use peer group education as a means to fight racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and intolerance (3rd edition) (2005).

- **Education pack**

Ideas, resources, methods and activities for informal intercultural education with young people and adults (2005).

- **The European Convention on Human Rights – starting points for teachers**

Human rights education fact sheets. Bringing human rights to life in the classroom.

Further reading

- EDC policies and regulatory frameworks (2003)
  ISBN 92-871-4949-6
- Responsibility: from principles to practice – Proceedings, Delphi, October 1999 (2001)
  ISBN 92-871-4511-3

- EDC: Words and Actions (2001)
  ISBN 92-871-4507-5
- Concepts of democratic citizenship (2001)
  ISBN 92-871-4452-4
- Adopted texts on education for democratic citizenship (2003)
  ISBN 92-871-5167-9
- Youth Cultures, Lifestyles and Citizenship (2000)
  ISBN 92-871-3984-9
- Education for Democratic Citizenship: methods, practices and strategies – Report (2001)
  ISBN 92-871-4509-1
- Learning democracy: education policies within the Council of Europe (2005)

Website

For information on Education for Democratic Citizenship and the EDC project, see the website: http://www.coe.int/edc/en

Resources

Democracy and democratic governance of schools

Apple, M and Beane, J	(1995)	*Democratic schools*, Buckingham, Open University Press
Chapman, J, Froumin, I and Aspin, D (eds)	(1995)	*Creating and managing the democratic school*, London, Falmer Press
Davies, L	(1998)	*School councils and pupil exclusions*, Birmingham, Centre for International Education and Research, University of Birmingham, UK (published by School Councils UK, www.schoolcouncils.org)
Flutter, J and Ruddock, J	(2004)	*Consulting pupils: what's in it for schools?*, London, RoutledgeFalmer
Hannam, D H	(2001)	*A pilot study to evaluate the impact of the student participation aspects of the citizenship order on standards of education in secondary schools*, London, Community Service Volunteers (CSV) – online at www.csv.org.uk/csv/hannamreport.pdf
Harber, C and Meighan, R (eds)	(1989)	*The democratic school*, Ticknall, Education Now Books
Harber, C	(1992)	*Democratic learning and learning democracy: education for active citizenship*, Ticknall, UK, Education Now Books
Harber, C (ed)	(1995)	*Developing democratic education*, Ticknall, UK, Education Now Books (available through www.edheretics.gn.apc.org)
Harber, C	(1996)	*Small schools and democratic practice*, Nottingham, UK, Educational Heretics Press (www.edheretics.gn.apc.org)
Inman, S and Burke, H	(2002)	*School councils: an apprenticeship in democracy?* London, Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL)
Ruddock, J, Chaplain, R and Wallace, G (eds)	(1996)	*School improvement: what can pupils tell us?* London, David Fulton Publishers
Trafford, B	(1997)	*Participation, power-sharing and school improvement*, Nottingham UK, Educational Heretics Press (www.edheretics.gn.apc.org)
Trafford, B	(2003)	*School councils, school democracy, school improvement: why, what, how*, Leicester UK, Association of School and College Leaders (www.ascl.org.uk)

School council/pupil parliaments and circle time

Mosley, J	(1996)	*Quality circle time in the primary school*, Wisbech, LDA
Mosley, J and Tew, M	(2000)	*Quality circle time in the secondary school: a handbook of good practice*, London, David Fulton Publishers
School Councils UK	various	A huge range of resources and material on setting up, maintaining and improving school/student councils: www.schoolcouncils.org
Trafford, B	(2006)	*Raising the student voice: a framework for effective school councils*, Leicester UK, Association of School and College Leaders (www.ascl.org.uk)

The changing society

Fullan, M (2001) *Leading in a culture of change*, San Francisco, USA: Jossey Bass

Hargreaves, A (2003) *Teaching in the knowledge society*, Maidenhead, UK: Open University Press

Putnam, R (2001) *Bowling alone: the collapse and revival of American community*, New York, USA: Simon & Schuster Ltd

Ridderstrale, J and Nordstrom, K (2001) *Funky business*, London, UK; Financial Times Prentice Hall

Sennett, R (2000) *The corrosion of character: personal consequences of work in the new capitalism*, London, UK; WW Norton & Company Ltd

What is democratic governance and how can it benefit schools in preparing young people to become participating, democratic adult citizens? How can schools and other educational institutions evaluate how they contribute to their students' education for democratic citizenship (EDC)?

By looking at the ways in which their schools operate from day to day, the two authors of this manual, both of them heads of secondary schools, describe how the journey down the road towards democracy tends to take shape, help readers to estimate how far their school has come, and offer practical advice on starting, continuing and evaluating the journey.

This manual is a practical tool that is designed to bridge the gap between theory and practice in EDC. It is part of a series of tools that, together, make up the Council of Europe's "EDC pack".

2005 European Year of Citizenship through Education

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The Council of Europe has 46 member states, covering virtually the entire continent of Europe. It seeks to develop common democratic and legal principles based on the European Convention on Human Rights and other reference texts on the protection of individuals. Ever since it was founded in 1949, in the aftermath of the Second World War, the Council of Europe has symbolised reconciliation.

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