



HAPPINESS HITS HOWLEY GRANGE

March 2015



UNITED NATIONS DAY OF HAPPINESS CONFERENCE



This United Nations style children's conference was developed as a collaborative activity between primary schools in the West Midlands.

Ruth Reynolds and Sue Payton from Ashwood Park with Angie Lewis and Sam Hettle of Howley Grange worked together with Pam Copeland and Des Bowden from B & C Educational to plan and organise the Happiness Conference. It was overseen by Simon Duncan head of Howley Grange and Keith Butler head of Ashwood Park.

The conference brought together 14 schools from across the West Midlands and demonstrated the value of such collaborative enterprises in furthering many of the current educational agendas in Global Dimensions, Rights Respecting, British Values and Social, Moral, Spiritual, Cultural education.

"Every child, no matter who they are or where they live has the right to grow up safe, happy and healthy"
UNICEF

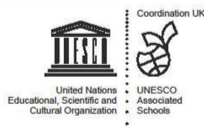
The UN style debate

Can money buy happiness?



Heavy concentration by two of the Ashwood park team as they develop their ideas as a position paper. The Howley Grange team making their contrary position clear, photographed by one of the roving reporters. It was resolved by a vote of 12 to 2 that money cannot buy happiness.

"Ensure that all pupils within the school have a voice that is listened to, and demonstrate how democracy works by actively promoting the democratic processes" British Values 2015



GLOBAL DIMENSION PARTNERSHIP
"Supporting schools in developing the global dimension"



www.primary-school-resources.com



UK UNESCO Co-ordinator .

Jasmine Jones, the UK National Co-ordinator for Associated Schools Projects (ASPnet) linking over 9000 schools in 184 countries, spoke at the happiness conference.

The UK network supports the integration of international/global perspectives in schools and promotes the values of **UNESCO**.

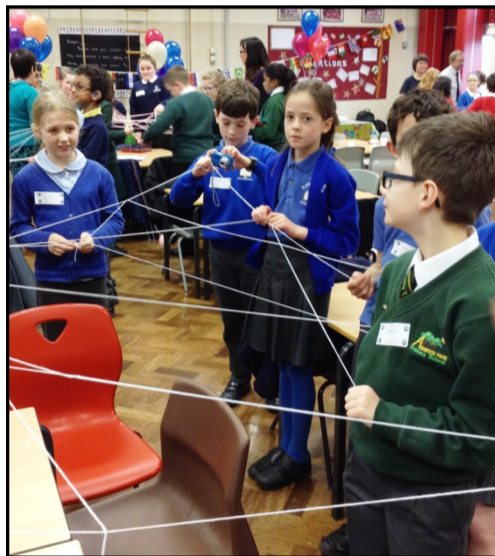
The four study themes proposed to Associated Schools are:

1. World concerns and the role of the United Nations system;
2. Education for sustainable development;
3. Peace and human rights;
4. Intercultural learning.

CONFERENCE SNAPSHOTS



Ban Ki Moon (aka Des Bowden) doing what he thinks he does best. Although highlighted, he seems not to catch this delegate's interest



Making a happiness web, demonstrating positive aspects of the participants, it seems the children are having to concentrate to be happy!



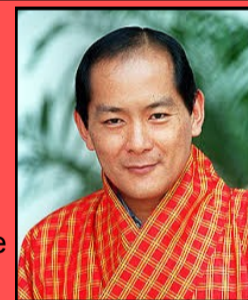
Intense discussions over the diamond nine



BHUTAN : The Source of Happiness

Bhutan is a small developing country located in the Himalayan foothills with a population of some 800,000 (2015), the main occupation being farming.

Jigme Singye Wangchuck, the Fourth Dragon King of Bhutan committed to building an economy that would try to move away from western material development (represented by Gross National Product (GNP)) and towards Gross National Happiness (GNH). GNH was perceived as more culturally relevant measure of development in a country steeped in Buddhist spiritual values than the usual economic based development models. The king voluntarily surrendered his power to his people in 2008, by stepping down as "King father" and allowing his son to guide the kingdom into a parliamentary democracy



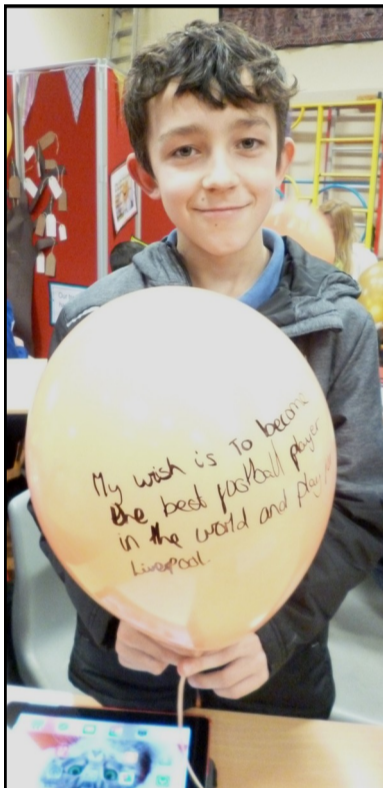
'We in Bhutan view ourselves not as citizens of Bhutan but as Bhutanese citizens of the world and small as we may be, we feel that one day we may be the conscience of the world'. Fifth Dragon King, coronation speech 2008.

GNH has been officially used in Bhutan since 1972. In 2011 UN General Assembly of the United Nations recognized the value of Gross National Happiness and proclaimed 20th March as International Day of Happiness.

BALLOONS OF BHUTAN

Jonathan Harris spent two weeks in Bhutan, interviewing 117 people about different aspects of happiness. He asked people to rate their level of happiness between one and ten, and then inflated that number of balloons, so very happy people would be given ten balloons, and very sad people would be given only one. He also asked each person to make a wish and then wrote that wish on a balloon of their favourite colour. All wish balloons were strung up at Dochula, a sacred mountain pass at 3,000m, and left to blow in the wind, mingling with thousands of prayer flags. We replicated this activity by filling Howley Grange hall with bobbing balloons.

www.number27.org/bhutan



PARALLEL CONFERENCE HELD IN THE GAMBIA



Many of the staff present from all these schools had visited The Gambia through The Global Dimension Partnership, (Des Bowden and Pam Copeland) and most have started productive school partnerships.

The following week a parallel UN Happiness Conference was arranged at Bakau Newtown Lower Basic School in the presence of Mr Lamin Jarjou, the Gambian equivalent of Jasmine Jones. Some 60 pupils from Bakau Newtown Taling Lower Basic and Wellingara Lower Basic schools attended. The conference was hosted by Mrs Haddy Njie, the head, and Mr Wensu Faye, the school's senior

teacher. The conference was actually held on the 20 March, the official UN Day of Happiness. Mrs Haddy Njie wrote, "...the International Day of Happiness will always be remembered. It was both educational and interesting. I must confess, we all enjoyed every bit of it. The balloons are still in the library and some in my office. Let's always be happy and keep on laughing ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha....."



14 West Midlands Schools



This conference was the second in a rolling programme of events - if your school would like to host the next conference please contact Des or Pam on: b-cltd@hotmail.co.uk



St Brigid's, Northfield



Simon Duncan, head of Howley Grange, entering into the spirit of the conference by looking happy! Delegates were grateful for the warm reception, the balloons and especially the lunch. He commented, "We are so pleased about the way the event went, our children have not stopped not talking about what they learnt and the new friends they made".

The organisers are really grateful to all the schools for making the United Nations Conference such an outstanding success. Each of the schools had a delegation of at least two staff and six children and all participated in the learning activities. One member of each delegation was a member of the reporting team.

The delegates played a full part in the debates and altogether contributed to what Jasmine Jones, the UK UNESCO Schools co-ordinator claimed was '...an uplifting conference, I do hope the happiness spreads'



Pam sprouting angel wings as she gives her happiness introduction

Ashwood's Happy Trees

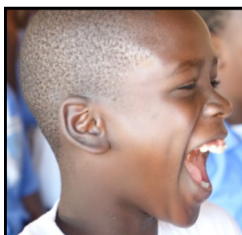
Ashwood Park spread the happiness by providing each school with a tree to plant at their school as a memento of the Happiness Conference.

Organiser Ruth Reynolds happiness expert from Ashwood Park. The best smiley face at the conference



Next Gambia CPD course

The Global Dimension Partnership will be scheduling their next CPD course in the Autumn term. If your school is interested please contact Pam or Des by email to globdp@hotmail.co.uk



Laughter Yoga ended the conference with smiles

The conference started with the Pig of Happiness and ended with renditions of Pharell Williams Happiness song, sung by Howley Grange choir and all the delegates. The session of Laughter Yoga let the delegates go back to their schools bubbling with laughter, with their wish balloons, boxes of happiness and a happiness tree



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