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1996 - 1997



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"CSV are doing invaluable work in promoting community service learning among young people. I have been very impressed by the CSV schemes I have seen on recent school visits. Such schemes have a key role to play in the development of our young people as responsible and active citizens. Their success clearly owes so much to the enthusiasm and dedication of all those involved."

The Rt. Hon. Gillian Shephard, MP Secretary of State for Education and Employment September 1995

### Preface

Service learning develops people and builds stronger communities.

Service learning is an education method which links meaningful student community service with academic learning, personal growth and civic responsibility.

Service learning can be used to promote standards, skills, and social values in education. It complements initiatives to promote effective education and community partnerships in schools, colleges and universities throughout the UK.

Service learning treats young people as a resource to their communities.

This Guide provides an introduction to the philosophy, principles and practice of service learning. It draws on work done in the USA and the UK. We welcome comments that will help us to improve it.

John Potter, Manager, CSV Education,

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### Definition of Service Learning

Service learning is an education method which links meaningful student community service with academic learning, personal growth and civic responsibility.

### Service learning:

- offers concrete opportunities for young people to learn new skills, think critically, and test new roles in an environment that encourages risk-taking and rewards competence
- is incremental, and progresses from one year to the next
- is appropriate for use with all students and in all curricular areas
- is integral to the taught and whole curriculum (and not a bolt-on activity)
- provides structured time for the students or participants to reflect on what they have learned from the experience
- is accredited and celebrated
- responds to a wide range of needs in the school, college, university and wider community

### Service Learning Activities

There can be as many service learning activities as there are needs in the community and opportunities in the school, college and university. Typically projects involve peer learning, community service, work on the environment, intergenerational projects and initiatives to develop communities through the arts, sciences and sport.

### An Important Distinction

# Community Service versus Community Service Learning

Community service has a long and honourable tradition in British education. Large numbers of young people have greatly benefited their communities, schools, colleges and universities through voluntary activity to benefit others.

Community Service Learning, often referred to simply as Service Learning, links service with learning and learning with service.

A simple example makes the distinction clear. Young people engaged in a clean up campaign in their neighbourhood will do useful service, but they may learn little or nothing from it. Students in a south coast Community College linked their litter campaign with a piece of real learning. They undertook simple research, made videos, and presented their case to their peers and to the local authority. In doing this they tackled the problem at its roots. They also added significantly to their knowledge and ability to make good things happen.

By linking learning with service and service with learning, schools, colleges and universities can devote serious energy and resources to activities that have real learning outcomes.

Service learning is a strategy that can make a significant contribution to making Britain a learning society.

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### Benefits to Students, Schools, Colleges and Universities

## Service learning offers students the opportunity for:

**Intellectual Growth:** Community Service Learning gives students the skills to:

- · acquire new knowledge and concepts
- · apply their knowledge critically
- develop critical thinking and problem solving skills
- reflect on their experiences

**Personal Growth:** Students undertaking service learning develop:

- self-confidence and selfesteem
- self understanding
- a sense of identity
- independence and autonomy
- openness to new experiences and roles

- ability to take risks and accept challenges
- a sense of useful purpose
- positive personal values and beliefs
- responsibility for one's self and one's actions

### Social Growth: Service Learning develops students'

- communication skills
- leadership skills
- ability to work with others
- acceptance and awareness
   of others from different cultures and
- backgrounds
- ability to work with others
- a sense of caring for others
- a sense of belonging
- peer group affiliation

### Citizenship

This involves developing an understanding of the responsibilities and rights of citizens through meeting real needs in the community. Students directly benefit from:

- learning how decisions are made
- analysing community needs
- taking positive action

#### **Preparation for Work**

Service learning complements work experience. It benefits employers and offers students the opportunity to develop:

- realistic ideas about work
- Key skills
- leadership and the ability to follow directions from others
- team work
- responsibility, reliability and the ability to see a task through
- · contacts and references for future job opportunities

### Benefits to Schools, Colleges and Universities Community service learning fosters:

- positive partnerships with the local community, including employers and the local authority
- democratic participation
- social values
- · peer learning, including group learning

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### Quality Practice

The following check list has been distilled from experience in the United States and the UK.

### Does your service learning programme:

- Strengthen service and academic learning through integrating the work within the mainstream taught and whole curriculum? (Service learning cannot usually be delivered as a bolt-on to existing activities.)
- Feature in your Development Plan and publicity?
- Provide concrete opportunities for young people to increase their knowledge, learn new skills, think critically and to test new roles in an environment that encourages risk-taking and rewards competence?
- Involve students in planning the project?
- Involve students in preparation and reflection?
- Offer students skilled guidance and support?
- Recognise the students' achievements?
- · Offer a meaningful contribution to the community?
- Develop purposeful partnerships with the community and others involved in the project?
- Provide staff and tutors with the appropriate training and professional development to promote effective service learning activities?

### The Service Learning Process

Learning through community service usually involves a four step process:

**Preparation:** This consists of learning activities that take place prior to the service itself. Students must understand the purpose of the project, what is expected of them as well as what they can expect to gain from the work. This includes:

- identifying and analysing the challenge
- · selecting and planning the project
- training and orientation

Action: The project itself must:

- be meaningful
- have academic integrity
- be supervised well
- provide for student ownership
- be developmentally appropriate

**Reflection:** Reflection enables the students to think critically about their service experience. They can reflect through:

- discussion
- reading
- writing
- · developing a portfolio

Celebration: This is an occasion to recognise what the students have achieved. It may include media coverage, a special event, the award of certificates or other ways of marking the end of the project.

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### CSV and Service Learning

CSV Education is part of CSV (Community Service Volunteers) which creates opportunities for people to play an active part in the life of their community through volunteering, the media, training and education.

#### Our Mission

Our mission is to promote and support Community Service Learning in schools, colleges and universities throughout the UK.

### Our Objectives

- Every pupil and student to undertake a minimum of 10 hours service learning each year
- Every school, college and university to include service learning in its development plan and activity

To achieve our objectives we aim to provide:

- educators with materials, training and support for service learning
- policy makers, opinion formers and practitioners with evidence of the benefits of service

### Our Programme

In higher education we support service learning through CSV Working Together, and we manage the UK's largest student tutoring initiative, CSV Learning Together. In schools our work includes two flagship initiatives on service learning: Barclays New Futures and, in association with other organisations, Changemakers. CSV is also promoting community volunteers in schools and service learning initiatives with local government. We are in partnership with the Pennsylvania Institute for Environmental and Service Learning.

### Agencies & Organisations

#### British Trust for Conservation Volunteers

36 St Mary Street, Wallingford, Oxfordshire. 01491 39766

#### Centre for Citizenship Studies in Education Queens Building, Barrack Road.

Northampton NN2 6AF 01604 37712

### Cities in Schools 60/61 Trafalgar Square

London WC2N 5DS 0171 839 2899

#### Citizenship Foundation

(Law rights and responsibilities) Weddel House 13 West Smithfield London EC1A 9HY 0171 236 2171

# Community Education Development Centre Lyng Hall,

Blackberry Lane, Coventry CV2 3JS 01203 638660

#### Council for Education in World Citizenship Weddel House

Citizenship Weddel House London EC1A 9HP 0171 329 1711

### Council for Environmental

Education (Information & partnership guide to environmental projects) School of Education University of Reading Reading

Berks RG1 5AQ 01734 756061

### Directory of Social Change

(Their work includes advice on fund-raising) 25 Stephenson Way London

#### **Education Extra**

(After School projects) 18 Victoria Park Square Bethnal Green London E2 9PF 0181 983 1061

#### Foundation for Education Business Partnerships 10-18 Manor Gardens London N7 6IY

0171 272 4411
Institute for
Citizenship Studies
6 Floor, Heron House

322 High Holborn

0171 269 4555

London WC1V 7PW

### Kid's Clubs Network

(Out of school activities) Bellerive House 3 Muirfield Crescent London E14 9SZ 0171 512 2112

#### Learning through Landscapes

3rd Floor, Southside Offices The Law Courts Winchester Hants S023 9DL

01962 846258

#### National Confederation of Parent Teacher Associations

2 Ebbsfleet Industrial Estate Stonebridge Road Northfleet Gravesend Kent DA11 9DS 01474 60618

#### National Youth Agency 17-23 Albion Street

Leicester LE1 6GD 0116 285 6789

#### School Councils UK

(Demcracy in action) 57 Etchingham Park Road London N3 2EB 0181 349 2459

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### CSV Education staff are pleased to provide further information on:

- CSV Learning Together (Student Tutoring)
- CSV Working Together (University Student undertaking service learning through accredited community projects)
- Barclays New Futures (a flagship sponsorship programme for service learning in secondary schools)
- Changemakers (a partnership initiative to enable students to develop and manage their own projects in secondary schools
- Community Volunteers, a programme to involve local people as volunteers in schools.

### Acknowledgement

Our thanks to the National Service Learning Cooperative / Clearing House (St Paul, Minnesota) for the use of their materials in drawing up this booklet.

CSV Education is in partnership with the International Division of the Pennsylvania Institute for Environmental and Service Learning based in Philadelphia.

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