

Teach effectively
Record progress and achievement
Choose the right resources

Kurdish Children and Youth Centre
National Excellence Award
Winner 2008

Background

The Kurdish Children & Youth Centre was established in 2003 to provide quality assurance for educational projects for Kurdish children and youth. Halabja Kurdish School is one of the projects managed by KCYC and is based in Islington. There are more than 60 pupils from Islington and neighbouring boroughs who receive support in their Kurdish mother tongue. The school also provides music and folk dance lessons.

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They see the most important factor in their success as being supported by dedicated members of the community, who are from an education background. Their involvement as volunteers has been the school's most important achievement and they are responsible for the high quality of services. The quality of the resources they have produced is outstanding.

To ensure that the teaching and learning in the school has a positive impact on the children, the school involves parents with their children's education. The school believes parents are the first educators of their children and can play a vital role in their children's achievement if they have enough information about what their children are doing in school and what the education system in this country is about. They have been boosting the parenting role within their community and are trying to give parents back the authority which has been negatively affected by their lack of knowledge of the British education system.

One of the most important outcomes of the project has been an improvement in the educational attainment of local Kurdish children. Ex-students are now studying in universities such as University of Oxford and Imperial College. One ex-student is now a member of the UK Youth Parliament and represents London in the Procedure Group.

Challenges and solutions

The most important challenge is financial, educational and human resources. Fortunately the presence of some dedicated skilful volunteers within the project has enabled the school to overcome these challenges and from the beginning, they have managed to work without having any paid staff. Now by winning this award they are hoping to appoint a manager.

Top tips

- Use the same resources as mainstream schools.

- They need to be translated by people who are education experts in order to keep topic aims the same as the English version.
- Be aware of UK teaching methodology.
- Make your teachers aware as well, and train them accordingly. They need to know how literacy and numeracy and other subjects are taught in this country in order to avoid any confusion.