

## Launceston College – Social Accounting and Audit in a school

Launceston College, a 1300 pupil comprehensive school, decided to start Social Accounting and Audit as a response to national drivers in the field of education, including:

- Self evaluation is becoming central to improvement/ inspection
- Every Child Matters: agenda introduced nationally
- Citizenship introduced into curriculum
- Schools need support to develop appropriate self-evaluation processes.

One of the school's governors, Roger Catchpole, had been involved in Community Business Scotland Network's pilot social accounting project in several primary schools in Nepal in 2004. Roger was able to act as facilitator at Launceston College, building from the knowledge and skills gained in the Nepal pilot. The senior management team agreed to Launceston College piloting social audit in one area of school life.

The school established a Social Accounting working group July '05, and set about following a three step process. The social accounts were to focus on one objective: **'pupils' contribution to the community'**, which tied in with the citizenship agenda.

Work included extensive collection of data from across the school's wider community – local residents and employers, pupils, parents, staff and primary school partners. The Sub group drew up accounts and presented them for audit in the summer of 2006. Following the audit panel meeting, a Social Audit statement, verifying the accounts was issued in July '06.

The College funded costs over the year long process.

On completion, the main strengths and weaknesses of the SA process when applied to a school were found to be:

### **Strengths/benefits**

- Structured and easy to follow but flexible
- Enabled addition of social impact to school's Self Assessment
- Greater involvement of stake holders in the management (*life*) of the school
- Good model provided by SA working group (The SA working group with its teacher, governor and pupil membership provides a good group model)
- Thirteen issues for action emerged from the Audit and have been fed into College's improvement plan.

### **Problems/weaknesses**

- Considerable time pressure on busy teacher and pupil team members
- Much 'at point of need' support required from the facilitator.

[http://www.launceston-college.cornwall.sch.uk/about\\_main.htm](http://www.launceston-college.cornwall.sch.uk/about_main.htm)