

Visions of education responding to the challenges of an uncertain future

Ubuntu

A Tide~ partnership project with
School of Education, University of Worcester

The Elephant Times [ET] was envisaged as a vehicle to stimulate Tide’s future work, not only in terms of themes and issues, but also potentially offering different ways of working. The latter became especially relevant as the pandemic developed, resulting in a need to review previous strategies. Further, ET was conceived, partly, so as to utilise Tide’s considerable catalogue of [free downloadable resources](#).

This project illustrates these characteristics, using the stimulus of previous Tide~ Ubuntu projects to inspire a fresh look at our own aspirations for schools to respond better to learner needs in the context of post-Covid global uncertainty.

Virtual meetings considered the basic tenets of Ubuntu. Participants’ thoughts then turned to developing an issue of the ET exploring how the basic principles of Ubuntu [see box] might inform education’s future development.

Contributors consider Ubuntu in a wide range of contexts: in Early Years Education and Care; in Music Education; in how schools may respond to the challenges faced by learners as they return from lockdown.



Fundamental value	Educational implications
1. Democracy	Empowerment of population to exercise democratic rights; provision of skills to participate, think critically and act responsibly.
2. Social justice & equity	Access to education is the most important resource in addressing poverty - only then will liberty be achieved. Reconciliation requires social justice to address past injustices - education for all is an essential element of social justice.
3. Equality	Access for all to an educational provision that does not discriminate on any grounds. Equality in the treatment of all, by all.
4. Non-sexism & non-racism	Regardless of race or gender, learners afforded the same opportunities and the same degrees of security.
5. Ubuntu [human dignity]	Mutual understanding and active appreciation of the value of human differences.
6. Open society	Participation rather than observation; empowerment to think and act; a culture of dialogue and debate.
7. Accountability [Responsibility]	Power and responsibility for all involved in education - learners, educators, managers, parents, etc.
8. Rule of law	Rules within which learners, educators, managers, parents etc, operate - including the law of the land
9. Respect	Precondition for communication and teamwork - schools require mutual respect between all partners.
10. Reconciliation	Acceptance of all individuals through learning about each other, valuing differences and diversity

From 'Towards Ubuntu' page 16

The starting point for the contributors’ thinking was what Barack Obama described as Nelson Mandela’s greatest gift ...

“There is a word in South Africa – Ubuntu – that describes Mandela’s greatest gift; his recognition that we are all bound together in ways that can be invisible to the eye; that there is a oneness to humanity; that we achieve ourselves by sharing ourselves with others, and caring for those around us.”

Obama, at Nelson Mandela’s memorial service, 10/12/2013

Such thoughts are surely strong enough to generate a review of learners’ experiences in school and to offer one guide as to how Tide~ may function in the future.

As part of the AGM process we plan to review the approach used to develop this project.



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