SWOT Analysis – Comenius "Energy for Life" Project: first year of visits

STRENGTHS	Comments	WEAKNESSES	Comments
1) Variety of different countries taking part and contributing; meeting from new people from across Europe 2) Excellent organisation of meetings; enthusiastic and committed colleagues; cooperation and communication among students 3) Programmes have encompassed cultural activities as well as the "Energy for Life" topic 4) Working with colleagues face-to-face at meetings; everybody prepared to contribute 5) Teachers and students develop a wide range of skills including ICT and foreign languages 6) Teachers motivated to improve language skills (especially English) 7) Teachers motivated to use all opportunities offered by Comenius for travel / courses / exchanges 8) Students experiencing cultures that they would not normally be able to experience 9) Lots of information offered about culture and daily life of partner schools' countries 10) Developing understanding of European citizenship 11) Many students making the most of the opportunities to make new friends and learn about one another's cultures 12) Teachers comparing ideas and learning about different school systems / pedagogy		1) Pupils' cooperative work on presentations could have been better at a technical and organisational level 2) There is currently no international collaboration on topic presentations 3) There is not currently any sustained linguistic / "foreign language" element for the British partner school, as the working language of the project is English 4) There is relatively little time between meetings, resulting in tight deadlines / The first meeting did not take place until December 2012, meaning that other trips are close together 5) There is no easy way of encouraging contact between students between meetings 6) Some students reluctant to communicate with other nationalities at meetings (shyness) 7) It can be difficult to choose social activities for students 8) Currently difficult to facilitate students maintaining contact with one another after meetings 9) Criteria for selection of students for projects varies between schools	- This had been discussed at a previous meeting and was thought to be difficult to arrange, especially if students had not already met. Dividing responsibility for parts of a task could be difficult. - Consider adding French/Spanish partner schools to future projects, if we are able to renew? - It was suggested that the first trip be held earlier in subsequent meetings. However, most schools cannot begin to plan until after the summer holidays. - Website / Facebook page would be good means for this - It was recognised that personality and fluency in English play a large part in this. However, all students have benefited academically, culturally and linguistically from participation - Most students have appreciated the opportunities made available to them - Website / Facebook would help - Discussed at meeting

OPPORTUNITIES	Comments	THREATS	Comments
1) Greater collaboration between students of different nationalities could enhance the impact of group presentations 2) A cooperative / collaborative online platform would enable teachers and students to share ideas and resources 3) Meetings between teachers and students could lead to further friendships → opportunities to travel and learn 4) Potential for "spin-off" / subsequent projects 5) Inclusion of a partner school from a French or Spanish-speaking country would provide an opportunity for British students to practise a foreign language 6) Students could meet earlier (within their own schools) to discuss the topic of study during the meeting 7) Different types of presentation (other than Powerpoint) should be encouraged in order to provide greater variety and interest 8) There is more interest among students to take part in other international programmes / exchanges / projects due to success of this programme	- Could be explored in future projects - Will be provided - A project based on locally / sustainably produced food was discussed at some length - Could be included in a spin-off project - Individual schools can facilitate this - No Powerpoint allowed at next meeting (Italy)! It was recommended that students use interactive whiteboard software or make films instead	1) Some students' lack of willingness to take responsibility for completing project tasks can lead to reduced enjoyment for other students 2) It can be difficult to find hosting families when many families are in a weak financial position 3) Communication and organisation between partners could deteriorate in future 4) Support from families could deteriorate 5) Students may not be willing to participate in online activities / the online platform 6) Difficulty in involving third parties in the project e.g. politicians, local businesses, community links (as requested by a national agency in their feedback) 7) There may be limited opportunity for teachers to travel outside school holidays due to pressure to maintain good exam results, which is the priority for school management in some countries 8) Students' commitment to the project may deteriorate 9) Social networking sites (e.g. Facebook) may be misused by students if they are recommended as a means of communication / maintaining contact. It was recognised that some teachers are reluctant to promote use of social networks without fully understanding how they would be used for the project	- Possibly reconsider means of selecting students for projects within schools - Consider external funding sources to subsidise families. Encourage students' families who have benefited from subsidised travel to host another student in return (get families to sign a contract?) Consider making a comment when submitting final report to suggest that budgets could be used to pay living expenses for families in need (in order to broaden social access to the project) - Work hard to ensure that this doesn't happen! - Ensure awareness of the importance of international projects and the opportunities that these can offer (newsletters / school websites / local newspaper articles, etc) - Use of Facebook, Twitter or another social networking site that they already use would make this less likely - Consider inviting these groups into school and involving the local press. Consider arranging a reception with mayor / local politicians with the opportunity for them to meet students and raise awareness of the project. Events such as Europe Day and European Day of Languages could be used to promote the project and involve third parties - Students and parents need to feed back support for the project to school leaders. School leaders need to be made aware of the importance of the international dimension for student admissions / teacher development, morale etc - Students need to be aware of the quality of the opportunites on offer and that some work / commitment is expected of them in return - It was suggested that if we use Facebook, each school in the project should nominate a "student moderator" to monitor posts and report abuse to a teacher. James Hayward to research code of conduct for use Facebook / Twitter