
WHOLE SCHOOL CASE STUDIES

See three examples of how global learning approaches can support whole school development



Education 2012 series

These case studies support our Education 2012 think-piece series considering how global citizenship can help schools in the current education environment in England.

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When global learning is approached in ways which support a whole school approach, a variety of benefits can be seen. See here three examples of ways in which this can support pupil voice, community cohesion and curriculum development.

These case studies are based on work done by Bridges Global and Tide~.

Image: Primary and secondary teachers from the Bishop's Castle cluster mapping environmental sustainability across the curriculum

Oxfam Education

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CASE STUDY 1

DEVELOPING PUPIL VOICE AT BISHOP'S CASTLE

Bishop's Castle Primary school used pupil voice to engage with global issues, developing participation and learning skills, and helping to promote positive and active engagement.



Pupils and teachers from Bishop's Castle primary and The Community College, Bishop's Castle, after leading a workshop for teachers from the region.

"The workshop leaders (pupils from year 5 /6) were fantastic facilitators – encouraging others to take part and learn."

Teacher attending workshop led by pupils from Bishop's Castle

This case study is about pupil-led work carried out at Bishop's Castle Primary School, in conjunction with a local cluster of primary and secondary schools.

It looks at how, through focusing on global development challenges, pupils were able to develop their public speaking and facilitation skills, so as to influence others and bring about positive change.

Bishop's Castle Primary School, Shropshire

Bishop's Castle Primary, with 240 children, is a fairly small primary school serving the town of Bishop's Castle and the surrounding area. Many of the pupil voice activities were inspired by the 'Millennium Development Goals (MDG) Countdown' project, led by Bridges Global Education Centre (Bridges) and supported by the Department for International Development.

Pupil voice activities

Since joining the MDG Countdown project in 2009, the Year 5 and 6 classes' learning has included work on world development issues such as trade, health, equality and education. Learning about global inequality motivated pupils to speak out, lending purpose to their writing or presentation, and giving them the opportunity to develop their communication skills.

Ofsted's subject specific guidance highlights the use of real life examples as motivating learning and accelerating achievement across a range of subjects. Ofsted inspectors visited Bishop's Castle Primary in March 2012 when Year 6 were making a short film of tips for adults on how to improve the world and, although they had the support of their teacher and a video maker, the ideas for the video were very much the pupils' own.

The inspector wrote:

“Where the planned curriculum supports academic and personal skills well, teachers use topic work to extend and develop pupils’ basic skills and they relate the learning to real life to make learning relevant and gain the interest of the pupils. For example, Year 6 pupils acted as film-makers and explored the good and bad features of sustainability, developed their note-taking skills and discussed their findings.”

The class have presented their learning in a variety of ways to audiences of their peers in the school and other local primary and secondary schools, parents and even a conference of teachers. Pupils led a simulation game about the banana trade for younger pupils and, at an open morning in Fairtrade Fortnight, ran a series of activities to get parents and local people thinking about trade issues. At the annual local cluster conferences for the MDG Countdown project pupils led workshops for their peers and gave dramatic presentations on global issues – honing their communication skills and gaining in self-confidence.

Standing back and letting pupils lead

Their teacher, Gareth Davies, embraced opportunities for pupils to have more control over their learning, build confidence and develop skills in speaking and presenting in front of an audience. Pupils gained confidence both through truly leading activities and through Gareth facilitating the expression of their rich seam of ideas.

For example, in studying the book ‘If the world were a village’, the pupils noticed that the book did not have a section comparing aspects of health around the world and, encouraged by the teacher, researched and created an additional section in the style of the book.

Pupil-led campaigning and action

Following topic work, pupils were involved in a number of campaigning activities, which helped give purpose to their persuasive writing and speaking. They wrote letters to their MP and scrutinised the reply critically, saying they would write back if he did not keep his promise.

The focus on pupil-led learning and action has been motivating for pupils and teachers alike. As Gareth writes,

“Over ten years ago I changed career to become a primary school teacher because, rather idealistically, I wanted a job where I made a positive contribution to the world and encouraged others to do the same... Learning about global issues with the children has helped me recapture those ideals and has been a fantastic experience. It has allowed meaningful learning to take place outside the narrow confines of English and Maths, but above all, despite the nature of some of the issues we have explored, it has been fun.”

Speaking-out skills

The class were given opportunities to speak out to a variety of age groups and audiences. However, the key to the success of the work was the thorough preparation. Pupils were given training on public speaking by staff from Bridges. When they ran a workshop in small teams, there was an agreed and detailed breakdown of exactly what each pupil would do. Workshop leaders were encouraged to practise what they would say, and to think about their audience. The peer workshop format that proved most successful involved a warm-up activity, a learning activity to engage the group, and a practical activity, followed by a summing-up.



Pupils in the short film '10 to the power 12 million' where pupils describe how we could make the world a better place.

At the end of the MDG Countdown project, five pupils ran a workshop, using an adapted version of The Chocolate Trade Game in Birmingham for over thirty teachers. To prepare, they had tried out the game with their own class and a younger class in school. Teachers at the conference were struck by the pupils' confidence, not just in speaking to groups of teachers they did not know, but also in guiding and challenging the teachers as they played the game.

Building links with other schools and the community

The school's pupil voice activities helped strengthen connections with the community, five other primary schools in the area and their local secondary school. Following a topic on trade, pupils led a workshop on the simulation game 'Growing Bananas' for parents. Later they ran 'the Trading Game' for pupils from other schools and members of the community, as part of a Transition Day at their feeder Secondary School. To find out more read the Community College, Bishop's Castle's case study on transition.

Broad and balanced curriculum – education with a purpose

The school's adoption of the International Primary Curriculum (IPC) has helped the school take a cross curricular approach to global learning. With a predicted increase in curricular freedoms, schools may feel the adoption of a broader curriculum model such as the IPC will help them to structure their learning (see 'Over to You', part of the Education 2012 for more ideas).

Links

'Speak Out for a Fairer World' is a short film and guide. It outlines the steps for successful speaking out <http://www.nickfoggdirector.co.uk/commissions/bridges-speak-out/>

10 to the Power 12 million is a short film made up pupils at Bishop's Castle Primary to encourage other young people to take a stand. <https://vimeo.com/44725273>

If the world were a village – book looking at development issues by imagining the world were a village of 100 people www.globaldimension.org.uk/resources/item/1071

Growing Bananas, a simulation game about the banana trade, can be downloaded from www.risc.org.uk/files/growing-bananas.pdf

The Chocolate Trade Game can be downloaded from http://learn.christianaid.org.uk/YouthLeaderResources/choc_trade.aspx

To read more about the MDG Countdown project <http://www.bridgesglobal.org.uk/projects.html>

Acknowledgements

With thanks to the staff and pupils of Bishop's Castle Primary School, in particular year 5/6 teacher Gareth Davies. Case study written by Bridges www.bridgesglobal.org.uk .

CASE STUDY 2

CURRICULUM PLANNING AT SMESTOW

Smestow secondary school used the exploration of cities within the History curriculum to look at how enquiry based learning can enrich the curriculum and challenge pupil perceptions.



Young people consider planning issues for Birmingham at a Tide~ Active Citizenship Event

“Global learning challenges a parochial outlook within a city, as well as a narrowly national outlook within the world.”

Jo Fairclough, History teacher at Smestow school.

This case study is about innovative work on the Humanities curriculum carried out by two secondary schools in Birmingham and Wolverhampton, as part of a larger project, led by Tide~ and supported by DFID, on ‘Cities as a focus for connected global curriculum.’

The schools’ work brings up questions about cross-curricular work on global themes, including ways of making strong links between the local area, past and present, and the wider world. As well as the Tide~ teachers’ network, it involved close collaboration with the historical archives in Birmingham and Wolverhampton.

Material from the project has been published as ‘Living archives ~ exploring migration stories’ on www.tidec.org/secondary/cities-people-and-change

The schools

Broadway School was described by Ofsted as ‘one of most improved schools’ in 2010, despite being in an ‘area of significant social and economic disadvantage’, with many students taking free school meals, and almost all coming from BME backgrounds where English is an Additional Language.

For the teachers, there were issues about young people being ‘in a bubble’ within the city. As History teacher Jo Fairclough explains:

“We wanted to encourage students to think about their own identities as both British and Brummies. We sought out tales from the past that would help them do that. With a 98% Muslim Asian intake, the religious impacts on how they related to the world were very strong, but for us it was nonetheless important to help them think about their dual or multiple identity”.

Having piloted the work at Broadway, Jo developed it further at Smestow School

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in Wolverhampton, in partnership with the nearby Highfields School. Smestow is a smaller secondary school which serves a more diverse socio-economic area. Therefore challenging parochial outlooks was an important aim.

Migration stories

Cities only exist because of inward migration, and this experience offered a common point of reference for most of the students and their families. The teachers developed an enquiry approach, around the idea of 'Migration stories', as a model for working with local archives through Geography and History, and for developing Personal Learning and Thinking Skills.

Using a series of key questions to explore issues, the enquiry culminated in the young people creating an archive of their own. Jo describes this as:

“Taking on the role and the experience of being an historian, rather than it being all about the teacher presenting. The idea of students taking responsibility for their own learning is here to stay.”

This compliments current Ofsted subject-specific guidance for outstanding teaching in History. At Smestow, this work was further developed into a Geography-led investigation of issues in the city, and students presented their ideas to local councillors.

Strengthening the curriculum

In both schools, says Jo, the Humanities were being impacted on by curriculum changes, with students losing some of their time spent with specialist teachers.

“We said, let’s hold on to what makes subjects unique. So many schools are doing collapsed curriculum in Year 7, but we wanted to try and create something where Geography and History were quite definite within that: a stew, rather than a soup.”

The cities focus also helped the schools pick up on the then-new curriculum concepts of migration, diversity and settlement.

Michael Maddison, HMI for History, has noted that *‘local history is still underdeveloped’* within schools. This project suggests one way of developing that strand, without becoming parochial, and while making the most of the *“wealth of resources literally on our own doorstep.”*

Partnership working

A further key element, again supported by subject-specific guidance from Ofsted, was the development of partnership with the city archives and with Tide~ - both of whom offered expertise in their specific fields, beyond that available within the school itself. Taking this strand about partnership further, the 'migration studies' group was one of five teacher groups that came together to share ideas, develop resources and learn from each other across subjects and schools. Further spreading this expertise, there are plans for the Smestow and Highfields teachers to run local subject cluster workshops based on the project.

The thinking behind the wider Cities Project was that by asking questions about our 'own' city, we can also explore complex global development issues such as financial uncertainty, poverty, conflict, migration, globalisation and sustainability - in a manageable and meaningful way. To this, the work at Broadway and Smestow can add an 'inclusive' way.

Curriculum strengths and Ofsted advice

In line with Ofsted guidance, the schools' work emphasises History as *“a dynamic subject to be explored and investigated, rather than as a subject to be received.”* (from the guidance document). It responds to the opportunities provided by a more joined-up KS3 curriculum, without losing sight of the strengths of the traditional subjects – a cross-curricular 'stew', not a 'soup'. Indeed, it responds to challenges about

the subjects themselves, including areas of relative weakness, and does so in a professionally creative manner.

From a global learning perspective, the work has been clearly rooted in the local communities, but has found ways of engaging with complex issues in the wider world, in a way which is meaningful to students.

Links and acknowledgements

'Cities, People and Change' - www.tidec.org/secondary/cities-people-and-change

As well as the work on Migration stories, this includes a wide range of other approaches to using cities to explore development issues at KS3, and suggestions for linking progression in global learning to Personal, Learning and Thinking Skills.

Ofsted Supplementary subject-specific guidance (2012)
www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/generic-grade-descriptors-and-supplementary-subject-specific-guidance-for-inspectors-making-judgements

With thanks to Jo Fairclough, Broadway School, Birmingham and Smestow School, Wolverhampton. This case study draws on Jo's work with Clare Fry, Broadway School, Birmingham, Nikki Thorpe at Birmingham Archives, and supported by Cathryn Gathercole and Becky Link at Tide~. Case study consultant: Ben Ballin.

CASE STUDY 3

SUPPORTING TRANSITION AT BISHOP'S CASTLE

Bishop's Castle Primary school used global learning and pupil voice as lenses to support primary to secondary transition, helping forge better relationships and support mutual learning.



A pupil from the Community College explaining how to play a deforestation simulation at the workshop about the cluster's transition work for teachers.

“Because we know how deforestation works, we might be able to have some more influence when we grow up”

Year 7 child, The Community College

This case study is about primary to secondary transition work carried out by The Community College, Bishop's Castle, in conjunction with their feeder primaries. It looks at how, through focusing on global development challenges, pupils and teachers were able to forge links between the schools and learn from each other.

The Community College, Bishop's Castle

The Community College, Bishop's Castle, is a fairly small secondary school with around 560 pupils on roll. It serves the sparsely populated rural area around the small town of Bishop's Castle. The School gained Humanities status in 2008. For the last three years, the Humanities department has worked with between three and five feeder primaries each year to explore global development challenges. These activities were part of a wider project 'Millennium Development Goals (MDG) Countdown' led by Bridges Global Education Centre (Bridges) and supported by the Department for International Development.

Working as a cluster to support transition

The schools took part in a range of joint activities including training, parallel curriculum work and transition days. A participating teacher commented that the activities were *“fantastic...brilliant for year 6 – 7 transition”*. This proved a meaningful and engaging way of helping meet Ofsted criteria, which consider how well pupils are prepared for next stage of education.

Teachers from the college and three primary schools undertook a two day training course on the 'Millennium Development Goals'. This provided them with the opportunity to get to know each other, learn about global issues and plan together. As Helen Plastow, geography teacher at the Community College, commented:

“It was the first time I had met teachers from our feeder primary schools. It was great to be able to share experiences and to learn more about the primary curriculum. I left the training days with plenty of ideas and resources to support me to teach about global issues. Equally valuable were the ideas generated by discussion with my primary colleagues about our students’ transition from Year 6 to Year 7, and these have been used to further improve our transition process.”

The schools continued to hold termly planning meetings.

Transition days and conferences

The cluster’s transition ‘Countdown Conferences’, exploring the MDGs, were particularly effective at ensuring continuity between year 6 and 7. Each school learned and took action on one or more of the MDGs, on topics such as health, education and equality. At the joint conference, pupils from each school led a presentation about the work they had done and delivered a workshop for pupils from the other schools. Pupils from the Community College hosted the event, welcoming primary pupils and community guests and assisting on organisational aspects of the day.

In Ofsted’s subject specific guidance across Humanities and elsewhere, the importance of forging links with other agencies (such as Bridges) and the local and global community is noted. The project not only did this, but also helped meet other subject criteria relating to the value of providing positive, rich and memorable experiences for pupils. The feedback from the events was almost universally positive, with primary teachers commenting that they had particularly enjoyed *“seeing children from a whole range of schools working together effectively and learning from each other”*. Children were clearly moved and inspired by the ethical issues, one Y6 child announcing to listeners: *“The credit crunch? When was the last time a kid did something that bad?”*

The conferences inspired the Humanities team at the Community College to develop their own transition day with a global theme. At one such day having learned about housing in Brazil, as one way to explore this further pupils from different schools came together to build model shanty towns from reused materials,. At another transition day Year 6 pupils were supported by Year 7 pupils and Sixth Formers in playing The Chocolate Trade Game, which taught them in an experiential way about the benefits of Fairtrade.

Sustainable Development is a particular strength for the college, and an opportunity for pupils to engage in spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) aspects of learning. At one transition conference pupils learned about water issues around the world and created graffiti protest messages on a mock up of a pit latrine made of recycled materials. These were sent to the local MP.



Pit latrine with messages about health and hygiene made at a transition conference

Links to the local and global community

Transition days were attended by local dignitaries, community groups and ethical businesses, uniting around an interest in development issues and cooperating with each other in taking action. Ofsted criteria consider pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development, in the context of such meaningful interactions with teachers and other adults and the local community – as well as the formal curriculum.

These interactions were valued by pupils and adults alike. As one pupil commented: '*I enjoyed being part of a huge community*'. Representatives from the local Fairtrade Shop, the local health service, the schools' Uganda link and local councillors have also all attended the conferences. As a result, a number of schools have gone on to form links with a children's choir in Uganda. The Humanities Department displayed work and engaged parents in activities about global development issues. Again, this relates positively to Ofsted SMSC criteria – which states that a school should engage parents in pupils' SMSC development.

Links

To read more about the MDG Countdown project
www.bridgesglobal.org.uk/projects.html

The Chocolate Trade Game can be downloaded from
http://learn.christianaid.org.uk/YouthLeaderResources/choc_trade.aspx

The Deforestation Game was adapted from the Timber! Role play, which can be downloaded from www.jusbiz.org/downloads/pdf/timber.pdf

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With thanks to Helen Plastow and Rachel Owen at The Community College, and the staff and pupils of Bishop's Castle Primary School; Newcastle Primary School; Norbury Primary School and St. George's Primary School, Clun and Hope Primary School for participating in the transition work. Case study written by Bridges
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