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## RESEARCH REPORTS

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CPRT Research Survey 5 (new series)

# PRIMARY EDUCATION FOR GLOBAL LEARNING AND SUSTAINABILITY

Douglas Bourn, Frances Hunt, Nicole Blum  
and Helen Lawson

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# **PRIMARY EDUCATION FOR GLOBAL LEARNING AND SUSTAINABILITY**

Douglas Bourn, Frances Hunt,  
Nicole Blum and Helen Lawson

A report for the Cambridge Primary Review Trust

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This is one of a series of research reports commissioned by the Cambridge Primary Review Trust (CPRT), a not-for-profit company established in December 2012 with the aim of consolidating and building on the evidence, findings and principles of the Cambridge Primary Review. Cambridge Primary Review Trust is supported by Pearson Education, based at the University of York and chaired by Professor Robin Alexander.

A briefing which summarises key issues from this report is also available. The report and briefing may be downloaded from the Trust's website: [www.cprtrust.org.uk](http://www.cprtrust.org.uk). The website also provides information and other reports in this series, and about the many publications of the Cambridge Primary Review.

We want this report to contribute to the debate about the future of primary education, so we would welcome readers' comments on anything it contains. Please write to: [administrator@cprtrust.org.uk](mailto:administrator@cprtrust.org.uk). The report contributes to the Trust's research programme, which includes both funded research projects and this series of specially-commissioned research reviews relating to the Trust's eight priorities.

The report relates to CPRT priorities 4 (sustainability), 5 (aims) and 6 (curriculum):

**Sustainability.** *Embed sustainability and global citizenship in educational policy and practice, linking to the UN agenda for global education after 2015.*

**Aims.** *Develop and apply a coherent vision for 21st century primary education; enact CPR aims through curriculum, pedagogy and the wider life of the school.*

**Curriculum.** *Develop a broad, balanced and rich entitlement curriculum which responds to both national and local need, eliminates the damaging division of status and quality between core and non-core, and teaches every subject, domain or aspect to the highest possible standard.*

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## **Acronyms**

ACT- Association for Citizenship Teaching

ASE - Association for Science Education

CPR – Cambridge Primary Review

CPRT - Cambridge Primary Review Trust

DCSF – Department of Children, Schools and Families (later became DFE)

DEFRA - Department for Environment and Rural Affairs

DFE - Department for Education

DFID - Department for International Development

EfS – Education for Sustainability

ESD - Education for Sustainable Development

ESDGC- Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship

GA- Geographical Association

GLP – Global Learning Programme

HA- Historical Association

ISA - International School Award

LfS – Learning for Sustainability

NATE – National Association for Teaching of English

NATRE – National Association for Teachers of Religious Education

NGO – Non-governmental organisation

OECD - Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development

OFSTED – Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills.

PISA - Programme of International Student Assessment for OECD

PSHE – Personal Social Health and Economic Education Association

RGS – Royal Geographical Society

RRSA - Rights and Respecting School Award

SDGs – UN Sustainable Development Goals

SMSC - Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural

UN - United Nations

UNCRC – United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted 1989.

UDHR - United Nations - Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted 1948

UNESCO - United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organisation



## PRIMARY EDUCATION FOR GLOBAL LEARNING AND SUSTAINABILITY

### Introduction

The need for primary schools to have a global rather than merely local perspective and to cultivate a sense of environmental responsibility was emphasised in the Cambridge Primary Review (CPR) final report's proposals for educational aims and the curriculum (Alexander, 2010, chapters 12 and 14). It was further underlined by the adoption of sustainability as one of the eight priorities of the Cambridge Primary Review Trust (CPRT).

The CPR final report outlined the challenge of globalisation thus:

This is the era of globalisation, and perhaps of unprecedented opportunity. But there are darker visions. The gap between the world's rich and poor continues to grow. There is political and religious polarisation. Many people are daily denied their basic human rights and suffer violence and oppression. As if that were not enough, escalating climate change may well make this the make-or-break century for humanity as a whole. Such scenarios raise obvious and urgent questions for public education. (Alexander, 2010:15).

Since the report's publication in 2010, global forces have become even more relevant to the lives of children and to their future. Issues such as economic migration, climate change and usage of digital technology have meant that what happens elsewhere in the world can have a direct impact on children's lives in the UK and *vice versa*. 2015 saw the launch of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that encourage all countries and stakeholders to support a vision for a sustainable future based on removal of poverty, and peace.

These developments raise practical questions for schools. CPR's final report continued:

Such scenarios raise obvious and urgent questions for public education. Should educating children's consciousness and understanding of these global trends, fears and threats be part of the work of schools? If so, what kind of a response should schools seek to foster, given that the issues are moral and political as well as economic, and that schools are properly wary of doing anything which will lay them open to the charge of indoctrination? (Ibid.)

Notwithstanding these anxieties, CPR judged that global learning and sustainability are now as inescapable for primary education as they will be for tomorrow's adults, and accordingly they were highlighted within CPR's curriculum proposals.

In relation to CPR's concern for careful handling of the issues, one response could be that a school should include some degree of learning about global and sustainability issues within its curriculum. There is a danger however of school activity on global or sustainability themes being merely the transmission of information or a call to support a campaign uncritically. As this report will show, the response from schools should be to see learning about these themes

as linked to the mission and purpose of the education taking place in the school, to equip the learners to make sense of the world around them. Learning about global and sustainability themes raises wider points regarding the purpose of education, the pedagogy of learning and the challenges this creates. These themes directly relate to wider questions posed in CPR's final report about moving beyond a view of primary education preoccupied by tested outcomes in a narrow range of competencies to understanding the need for all primary schools to provide children with a curriculum that is broad, rich and taught to a consistently high standard in all its aspects (Alexander, 2015: 275-6).

Throughout this report, reference will be made to the important role that civil society organisations can play in promoting learning about global and sustainability issues within the classroom. The report also notes that the materials from these organisations should be seen as the basis for an approach to learning, a pedagogical approach that opens up learners' minds to a range of perspectives and viewpoints.

This report will show that whilst education policy-makers across the UK may have taken note of the importance of these global and sustainability challenges, they have not on the whole seen its relevance to wider questions about the purpose and role of education. There are also examples at an international level, notably within UNESCO and in the new UN Sustainable Development Goals, of an approach to education that has broader societal relevance. But the tendency in England has been to focus on the social relevance of education in terms of addressing problems, such as global terrorism, through attempts to prevent radicalisation and the promotion of 'Fundamental British values'. There has also been an emphasis in England on responding to globalisation in terms of economic competitiveness resulting in a narrowing of the curriculum to focus on English and mathematics.

Within this report, reference will be made to the use within education of terms such as 'global citizenship', 'education for sustainable development' and 'global learning', but it will be suggested that the use of these terms has all too often come from a specific policy initiative, usually outside education, and what has been missing is a recognition of the central role of learning. For example using a phrase such as 'educating young people to be global citizens' has been interpreted in some quarters as meaning education in support of an aid agenda or the SDGs. There has also been a tendency within sustainable development to effect specific behaviour changes in areas such as carbon reduction. The aim of this report, commissioned by the Cambridge Primary Review Trust, is to make the case for a different pedagogical approach from that which dominates current education policy thinking. We argue for the development of a pedagogy for global and environmental social justice within schools.

Key questions and themes presented in this report are:

- Why it is important that children learn about global and sustainability themes?
- Global learning and sustainability are complex terms; how can they be made relevant and appropriate for primary schools?
- In what ways have policy-makers responded to these themes?
- In what ways does learning about global issues and sustainability pose wider questions about approaches towards learning?
- How can global and sustainability issues be seen as more than just another initiative



or a box to tick?

- How can a school embed global and sustainability issues within its everyday practice?
- What is the impact of learning about global and sustainability issues on the school, on teachers and on pupils?

This report is divided into eight main sections that explore:

- the changing global context within which primary schools are operating;
- the main concepts used within education to promote global and sustainability themes such as human rights, environmental understanding, global citizenship and global learning;
- the pedagogical challenges these themes pose, with a call for a pedagogy of global and environmental social justice;
- the policy context for primary education with specific reference to the UK, the different approaches to global and sustainability themes within each country, and the impact of these approaches on schools;
- the contribution of a range of initiatives on global learning and sustainability in primary schools in the UK, particularly those led by civil society organisations;
- examples of practice that illustrate how global and sustainability themes can be effectively brought together;
- evidence of the impact of global and sustainability themes on children's learning
- conclusions and recommendations for policy, research and practice.

## **1 - CHILDREN, EDUCATION, GLOBALISATION AND SUSTAINABILITY**

This section summarises the challenges that children face in response to living in a globalised world, and the impact of living in uncertain times given the predicted environmental threats to the planet. It considers why it is important that children learn about global and sustainability issues and explores how educationalists and researchers have addressed these challenges with regard to the future of education.

The 2015 UN Sustainable Development Goals highlight that there is much still to do to achieve 'inclusive and equitable quality education for all'. The Goals also call for specific objectives to be achieved in relation to educating about global and sustainability themes:

By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development (UNDES, 2015: 17).

Merely promoting learning about these themes is not enough. Alongside any form of promotion of learning about issues such as climate change, global poverty and gender equality, there needs to be consideration of *how* children learn about them, what influences their views and behaviours, and how a more critical and engaged approach towards learning can be promoted and sustained for both teachers and learners.

Children are not immune from, nor unaware of, the world around them. They are ‘growing up in a world of global media, in which the voices of many cultures compete for attention’ (De Block and Buckingham, 2007: viii). As a result of the mass media, the use of the Internet and social media, children today are more aware of, and have greater access to information about, the wider world than previous generations. Some children also enjoy frequent opportunities to travel abroad and encounter other cultures and ways of life. At the same time, evidence suggests that more and more children are gaining their knowledge and views about the wider world and the environment not from direct experience, but through looking at a screen (Buckingham, 2007).

Whilst there is some evidence that children in the UK are interested in learning about global issues (Hicks and Holden, 2007; DEA, 2008; Hunt, 2012; Warwick, 2008), there is debate as to how ‘globally literate’ UK children are when compared to other countries in the world. For example, a British Council (2014) survey of children around the Commonwealth found that UK children were behind many of their peers in other countries in terms of global awareness. The British Council survey found, for example, that British children’s thinking about the Commonwealth remains heavily influenced by colonial thinking. We return to this point later when we consider the relevance of postcolonial theory to the debate on the purpose and role of global and sustainability themes in primary education.

A similar trend emerges with regard to children’s interest in and connection with the environment. There is considerable evidence of children’s awareness of issues like climate change and the need to recycle materials (Alexander and Hargreaves, 2007). However, awareness of environmental issues comes not from direct engagement with the environment itself but from a more passive and indirect understanding of these issues. Direct interaction with the natural environment appears to be increasingly absent in children’s lives and this is a new phenomenon gives rise to concern because such experiences are essential in developing children’s knowledge and understanding of the world.

A key concern for both educators and policy-makers therefore is to ensure that access to knowledge about the wider world and the environment does not take the passive form of mere absorption of information with no direct engagement with the issues. Rather than just being informed about the environment and the wider world, children need to be supported in both understanding and experiencing them (cf. Rickinson et al, 2004; RSPB, 2006).

These themes resonate closely with points raised in CPR’s final report and follow up initiatives with CPRT on the importance of a pedagogical approach that brings in children’s wider experiences, their own voice and a ‘repertoire of knowledge, strategies and skills’ (Alexander, 2010: 308). Similar points have been raised elsewhere within the literature and particularly the work by Moll et al (1992).

## 2 - KEY CONCEPTS

Within the discourses and practices around global and sustainability themes, a wide range of terms have been used, although often with overlapping conceptualisations and issues. Here we look at some of the most commonly used terms in the UK: development education,

environmental education, the global dimension, global learning, global education, global citizenship, education for sustainable development, and education for sustainability.

The specific roots of these terms have been examined in detail elsewhere (Bourn, 2015; Palmer, 1998; Scott and Gough, 2003). The following discussion therefore simply summarises the evolution of these different terms and considers some of their implications for primary education.

**Development education** evolved as a response to aid ministries and international NGOs seeking support for development. Over time however this term became synonymous with a more critical approach to learning about development, influenced by the writings of Paulo Freire and a transformative approach seeking social change (Bourn, 2015).

**Global education** emerged in the 1980s as a way of bringing together various ‘adjectival educations’ of peace, human rights, intercultural, environment and development through a learner-centred approach. Particularly influential work in this field has been carried out by David Selby and Graham Pike (1988), and more recently, David Hicks and Cathie Holden (Hicks and Holden, 2007). After 2002, in Europe, global education became the dominant term for promoting learning about global and development issues and was characterised by an overt social justice element (Osler and Vincent, 2002; Hicks and Holden, 2007).

The term ‘**global dimension**’ is associated with a specific initiative in England. The term initially emerged in 2000, was revised in 2005 through a specific policy document produced by DfES and DFID, in association with the Development Education Association (now Think Global). The global dimension idea embraced eight distinct concepts:

Global Citizenship, Sustainable Development, Values and Perceptions, Interdependence, Social Justice, Diversity, Conflict Resolution, Human rights (DFES, 2005).

More recently the term ‘**global citizenship education**’ has been used as way of bringing together the themes of development and global education and the global dimension, but with a more specific emphasis on action and engagement in society, reflecting the ‘citizenship’ dimension (Fricke and Gathercole, 2015). Perhaps the most well-known definition of global citizenship comes from Oxfam UK (2015) which describes a global citizen as someone who:

- is aware of the wider world and has a sense of their own role as a world citizen
- respects and values diversity
- has an understanding of how the world works
- is passionately committed to social justice
- participates in the community at a range of levels, from the local to the global
- works with others to make the world a more equitable and sustainable place
- takes responsibility for their actions.

The research literature, however, picks these ideas apart further and questions, in particular, the role of education in stimulating action (see Davies, 2006: 6; Marshall, 2007). For example, Andreotti (2006) in her discussions of global citizenship refers to a ‘soft’ approach that

emphasises a moral concern with issues such as poverty and inequality; and a 'hard', more critical social justice approach. While the soft approach is likely to encourage actions such as donations to charity appeals, it may have only a short-term impact on learners. She argues that the hard approach, on the other hand, is more likely to lead to critical thinking and deeper engagement with issues of global inequality.

**Global learning** is the most recent term to emerge from the development education discourse and is probably the most commonly used in relation to these issues in the English education system. This term emerged over the past decade, partly as an effort to focus greater attention on processes of learning and advocates suggest that it should be a guiding principle for teaching and learning rather than a discrete curricular area. It is argued that it should be shaped around notions of development, environment, peace and inter-culturalism, and by the capacities needed to live in a global society. These include the ability to understand and critically reflect on global interdependencies and learners' own values and attitudes, to develop the learner's own positions and perspectives, to be able to see options, to make choices, and to participate in communication and decisions within a global context (Scheunpflug, 2011: 33-34).

**Environmental education** has had a similar history to that of development education, in that it began with transmission modes of teaching and learning about the environment but later evolved into a more distinct pedagogical approach relating learning to experience and personal change (Palmer, 1998).

**Education for sustainable development (ESD)** was originally seen in the 1990s as bringing together environmental and development education but evolved into an approach towards learning that emphasised the environment (broadly defined to include human and social elements as well as the physical and natural). The Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 provided a foundational definition and direction to what has become known as ESD:

Education, including formal education, public awareness and training should be recognized as a process by which human beings and societies can reach their fullest potential. Education is critical for promoting sustainable development and improving the capacity of the people to address environment and development issues. While basic education provides the underpinning for any environmental and development education, the latter needs to be incorporated as an essential part of learning (UNCED, 1992: 36.3).

The role for education outlined here represents a significant change to earlier understandings of environmental education. This is due to its much broader attention to basic education and links to social concerns such as human rights, peace and gender inequality. It also signifies a shift in approaches to teaching and learning about environmental and development issues, with a move from transmission modes (e.g. presenting information about environmental disasters in the hope that this would stimulate behavioural and social change) to one which aims to provide learners with the knowledge and skills required to make informed decisions (e.g. critical thinking, problem solving, an awareness of systems of inequality).

Education for Sustainable Development's concern with social issues is also echoed in the more recent emergence of terms such as global citizenship and the global dimension (as discussed above) at the beginning of the 21st century. While the addition of 'sustainability' to international agendas highlighted a shift in thinking about the process of development, the increasing use of 'global' signalled a response to the new social, cultural and economic contexts of a globalised world.

Unfortunately, a weakness of all of these terms is that they lack conceptual clarity and one can often find them used interchangeably within policy documents. This has resulted in some conceptual confusion and has had implications for practitioners who have been faced with a range of terms, some of which are overlapping and others offering distinctive ideas and practices. The multiplicity of terminology also gives rise to an important question about the notion of 'education for' with its implication that specific objectives are being promoted unquestioningly as attainable and desirable rather than contested and discussed critically (Jickling, 1992). In response to these concerns, Selby argues that setting:

...educational goals within a broad values framework does not preclude argument or student self-determination; the scope for disagreement remains as both values, understandings and practical implications are worked through, while space still exists for deep challenge to the values framework. We can educate for sustainable development, sustainability or sustainable futures while, at the same time, recognising and flagging the contested nature of the field in question (Selby, 2009:207).

Selby's comments also resonate with broader debates about learning for, about and through: for example, Lister's work on education and human rights (1994) and Fullan and Langworthy's ideas on 'deep learning' (2013).

These debates are important in understanding approaches to global learning and sustainable development within primary schools because they raise significant questions about the need to develop approaches to learning which promote children's engagement, empowerment and sense of agency with regard to their present and future lives as global citizens. However one significant issue for primary education which can be identified from the range of concepts being used is a shared emphasis on 'softer skills' such as fairness, tolerance, compassion and concern for protecting the natural world (Hunt, 2012).

### 3 - THE CHANGING POLICY CONTEXT

#### **International trends and initiatives**

To understand why these different terms have emerged, it is necessary to note that there have been a large number of initiatives in education promoting greater learning about global, international and development themes. At an international level these initiatives demonstrate increasing interest and support for this area of learning, and since 2000, they have included the following:

- UN Decade on Education for Sustainable Development, 2005-2014

- UN Programme for Human Rights Education, 2005
- UNESCO Guidelines on Intercultural Education, 2006
- UN Secretary General's Global Education First Initiative, 2012 (global citizenship education is one of its three pillars)
- UN Sustainable Development Goals in 2015
- OECD announcement that 'global competencies' will feature in the PISA report for the first time in 2018

### *United Nations Sustainable Development Goals*

The UN SDGs provide an important impetus that can build on the activities and initiatives that have taken place across the UK over the past decade. They encourage all countries and stakeholders to support a vision for a sustainable future based on removal of poverty and promotion of peace. They recognise the importance of the individual and civil society in achieving the goals:

Children and young women and men are critical agents of change and will find in the new Goals a platform to channel their infinite capacities for activism into the creation of a better world. (UNDES, 2015: 12)

The SDGs make specific reference to global citizenship and sustainability and a major task for all concerned with promoting learning about these themes is to lobby education policy-makers to ensure that the goals are addressed through educational policies relating to practice in schools.

### *UNESCO*

The UN SDGs also stem from the work of UNESCO and are closely connected with its call for greater prominence for the concept of global citizenship. UNESCO's Education for All 2014 policy report, for example, emphasises that global citizenship should include promotion of environmental sustainability and peace building. Global citizenship is also seen to entail the development of skills such as communication and co-operation, problem-solving, conflict resolution, leadership and advocacy (UNESCO-GMR, 2014: 295). The UNESCO Report also states that:

...global themes and skills can be made more relevant by adapting them to national and local contexts and real-life situations, with core values being taught across the curriculum (UNESCO-GMR, 2014: 295.).

Thus UNESCO's notion of global citizenship is integral to education for sustainable development: the two concepts representing different sides of the same coin and focusing on the development of the same capabilities:

- Cognitive skills - learners acquire knowledge, understanding and critical thinking about global issues and the interconnectedness/ interdependency of countries and different populations;
- Socio-emotional skills - learners have a sense of belonging to a common humanity,

sharing values and responsibilities and holding rights; learners show empathy, solidarity and respect for differences and diversity;

- Behavioural skills - learners act effectively and responsibly in local, national and global contexts for a more peaceful and sustainable world (UNESCO, 2014).

What UNESCO - and to some extent the SDGs - aim to highlight is that the notion of global citizenship in education should promote the development of universal human values, including human rights, gender equality, cultural diversity, tolerance and environmental sustainability (UNESCO, 2014).

This approach to global citizenship and education for sustainable development has some resonance with policies and initiatives developed in a number of countries, particularly in Western Europe over the past decade. Sweden, Finland, Germany, Netherlands, Wales and Scotland have instigated policies and programmes in which these two concepts are integrated. Sweden's 'Global School' initiative, for instance, seeks to:

Stimulate school improvement and support the pedagogical development work on learning about global issues for sustainable development. The goal is that, by the end of their studies, pupils will have developed knowledge and attitudes that will enable them to consciously adopt a position on global issues for sustainable development and to actively participate in the work of achieving a sustainable society (Sandahl, 2008, cited in Knutsson, 2011:207).

An important focus of this programme is the professional development of teachers alongside the opportunity for groups of teachers to visit schools in the Global South. Whilst the programme, which started in 2001, has had a high degree of success in reaching a large number of schools, it has been noted that it has been difficult for the programme to agree what comes under the umbrella of sustainable development (Lund, 2012).

A more recent driver of the UNESCO initiatives on global citizenship has been the need for an educational response to extremism, intolerance and xenophobia, a feature of many societies around the world, over the past decade. The promotion of learning about global themes, to understand causes of inequality and conflict in the world, continues to be a feature of many NGOs practice. The European Forum on Development Education, for example, noted that their members:

...must now use their resources, their expertise in making complex global interdependence understandable and their experience with intercultural issues and deconstructing stereotypes to make a contribution to an open European society, to a culture of solidarity within Europe and to a constructive dialogue with those who react with fear and hostility to changes in their lives (CONCORD, 2015).

### **Responses from policy-makers in the UK**

Although learning about global and sustainability themes in the UK has had a high profile internationally through the work of academics such as William Scott, Daniella Tilbury, John Huckle and Stephen Sterling, and a range of NGOs such as Oxfam, it has had little government

policy support since 2010, with the exception of the Global Learning Programme (see: Martin et al, 2013; Bourn, 2015). However, there has been policy support in Wales and Scotland. William Scott has commented upon the importance of a strategy:

The purpose of schooling is a preparation for lifelong learning and a preparation for citizenly engagement, and something of an apprenticeship for them both. In terms of sustainability, then, the purpose of schools might be seen as stimulating young people's development of awareness and interest in relation to living sustainably with the hope (but not certainty) that this will give rise to social participation that can contribute, for example, to the goals of greater social justice and human well-being, and the bolstering of the resilience of ecological systems' (Scott 2011: 413).

Currently the policy context in the UK is characterised by disparities associated with an increasing divergence of approach across the four nations in their response to these agendas. A further concern is the impact of almost constant change on the ways in which educators and schools engage with global and sustainability issues within their practice.

### *Wales*

Wales has been at forefront of development in Europe with its introduction of Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship (ESDGC) as a cross-curricular theme, and its stated aim is to 'give learners, at all stages of education, an understanding of the impact of their choices on other people, the economy and the environment' (Welsh Government, 2014). This policy has now been in place for over a decade and whilst there has been some debate about a potential imbalance towards environmental over global themes, there is clear evidence that this concept has had considerable impact in primary schools (Estyn, 2014).

Within Wales, the focus of this ESDGC approach is on specific themes, including: the natural environment, consumption and waste, climate change, identity and culture, wealth and poverty, choices and decisions and health. To ensure that ESDGC is effectively embedded, its implementation is part of Estyn's inspection framework and a report was produced in 2014 to review progress (Welsh Government, 2014; Estyn, 2014). The report noted that progress had been made since an earlier review in 2006 but also more needed to be done on making links between ESDGC across the curriculum, including the Welsh government's priorities on numeracy and literacy. The Global Learning Programme for Wales which began in 2014 now has links to literacy and numeracy embedded as key objectives.

One theme that was clearly identified within the practice in Wales was the lack of expertise and experience in many schools to deliver high quality ESDGC; and it was a priority to provide more professional development and identify a designated teacher in the school to lead on this area (Estyn, 2014). This lack of expertise was compounded in Wales by the closure of a number of civil society organisations, particularly local Development Education Centres and the umbrella body, Cyfanfyd, which historically played a role in supporting work with schools.



More recently, a curriculum review (Donaldson, 2015) identified ‘developing learners as ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world’ as one of the four main purposes of education. This review is likely to inform the curriculum in Wales in coming years.

### *Scotland*

The Scottish Government introduced Learning for Sustainability as a curricular entitlement to meet its 2011 Manifesto Commitment on One Planet Schools. Learning for Sustainability integrates global citizenship education, outdoor learning and sustainable development education into a coherent, whole-school experience for learners.

Since publication of the One Planet Schools report in 2013, the Scottish Government has established a National Implementation Group which has responsibility for ensuring that Learning for Sustainability is being implemented in schools and classrooms through the GTCS Professional Standards. Education Scotland has led work to provide practical support to schools for Learning for Sustainability and its efforts are highlighted in the *How Good Is Our School?* guidance which aims to shape improvement planning in schools. Government funding for the Development Education Centres, Eco-schools, UNICEF’s Rights Respecting Schools programme and the UN Regional Centre of Expertise in Learning for Sustainability at Edinburgh University also support the Learning for Sustainability commitment.

The individual themes of Learning for Sustainability are strong in Scottish education and have been for some time. ‘Developing citizenship’, for example, is explicitly mentioned in the Curriculum for Excellence materials and requires that learners are able to:

To take their place in the world, contribute to it confidently, successfully and effectively, understanding the rights and responsibilities of living and working in a globalised world. Global citizenship includes development of knowledge, understanding, skills and values (Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2011).

Interestingly, the Scottish government was particularly influenced by UNESCO’s agenda on sustainable development and has produced an action plan in support of the UN Decade on Education for Sustainable Development which centres on six cross-curricular themes:

- Interdependence
- Diversity
- Carrying capacity
- Rights and responsibilities
- Equity and justice
- Uncertainty and precaution

In addition to curricular content the action plan also calls for a values-based pedagogy:

Sustainability requires pedagogies which foster in learners the ability to think critically and creatively and to analyse, evaluate and synthesise complex issues and apply their learning in new contexts. Pedagogies should also encourage a systems thinking approach (Education Scotland, n.d.).

It is this whole school approach that makes Education for Sustainable Development distinctive. Recent guidance for schools on self-evaluation and improvement includes a key aim of ‘increasing learning for sustainability’ alongside other national priorities of tackling inequity, raising attainment and developing the young workforce (Education Scotland, 2014). These priorities are viewed as complementary rather than competing. Much of the evidence in *Conversations about Learning for Sustainability* (Education Scotland, 2014) points to the importance of Learning for Sustainability in increasing learner motivation, engagement, participation and skills for learning, life and work.

### *Northern Ireland*

In Northern Ireland, the curriculum places explicit emphasis on the development of skills and personal capabilities for lifelong learning and for contributing effectively to society. They are embedded throughout the revised Northern Ireland Curriculum at each key stage and pupils should have opportunities to acquire, develop and demonstrate these skills in all areas of the curriculum (CCEA, 2015).

At key stage 2 there is a recommended discrete area of learning called ‘The World Around Us’ with a focus on thinking skills and personal capabilities. This area of learning comprises the subjects of geography, history and science and technology, and is structured into four strands: interdependence, movement and energy, place, and change over time (CCEA, 2015). There is also an explicit reference to ‘local and global citizenship’ in the curriculum, aimed at key stage 3. These developments in Northern Ireland have been well-supported by a coalition of civil society organisations, including the Centre for Global Education which also co-ordinates the Global Learning Programme.

### *England*

In England, whilst there was strong support for global themes in formal education up to 2010 through the promotion of the global dimension as a cross curricular theme, with the change of government, global citizenship and sustainability has almost disappeared from the curriculum. There are, however, a few key policy areas which explore global themes including:

#### *Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development*

There is still a legal requirement for state schools to include these aspects of development as part of the curriculum and therefore they remain encompassed within the school inspection framework.

#### *Fundamental British values*

From January 2015 school inspections check that schools promote ‘fundamental British values’ within the framework of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The policy emphasis on British values has been particularly influential in primary schools and the DfE statement below is widely referenced on primary schools’ websites:

We want to create and enforce a clear and rigorous expectation on all schools to promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs (DfE statement, quoted in Wintour, 2014).

The extent to which the British values debate provides opportunities for global and sustainable development learning is perhaps at too early a stage in its implementation to assess fully. What can be noted, however, is that a range of NGOs, subject associations and the Global Learning Programme in England have all encouraged schools to use themes such as respect, tolerance and social justice to promote links between the British values policy and broader conceptualisations of global learning (Bowden, 2015). The issue is the context within which British values are explored and taught within the classroom, whether they are seen as an opportunity to address broader themes of social justice and tolerance or simply focus on narrow interpretations of 'Britishness' and sets of (arguably) associated values.

This theme of values relates to discussions surrounding economic migration and socio-cultural diversity. These themes were addressed in CPR's research survey by Ainscow, Conteh, Dyson and Gallannaugh (2010); and there are numerous examples in England where schools based in multicultural communities are promoting the value of having many languages and cultures within the school as a positive educational experience, that broadens horizons and enables children to understand different perspectives.

### **Education in the context of change**

The discussion above highlights the almost constant state of change in educational policy in the UK regarding global learning and sustainability over the last 10 years. While some initiatives have provided important new opportunities for educators and students in primary schools to engage with these issues, few have been accompanied by support for their implementation. It has therefore been largely left to schools to invest time and resources in responding to these changes. The uncertainty and inconsistency of approach has tended to undermine the overall impact of initiatives, although there are some examples of successful schemes referred to later on in this report.

Primary schools in England also face a range of pressures that can undermine their efforts to bring global and sustainability issues into their teaching and learning. These include an increasing emphasis on standardised assessment within formal education. Many educators worry that this trend may be undermining the overall quality of education, and posing particular challenges for aspects of learning like sustainable development which require greater attention to learning processes than to measurable outcomes (cf. Sterling 2001; Scott 2011).

These trends have meant that the engagement of primary schools in global and sustainability themes has been driven by teachers and school leaders who are either enthusiastic about these areas or see the need to respond to external agendas (Hunt, 2012). What is needed is a more coherent strategic response from policy-makers, as Martin et al (2013) have suggested, that brings together global and sustainability themes into a coherent strategy that offers clear, pedagogical guidance rather than narrowly-defined, prescriptive measures. Such a strategy

however also needs to put learning at its heart, which means moving from the more instrumental approach that has tended to dominate policy initiatives to date, to a more pedagogically based approach.

#### 4 - A PEDAGOGY FOR GLOBAL SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Global and sustainability themes may well be emerging in a range of policy initiatives around the world, but the mere inclusion of these themes poses far wider questions about the purpose of education, what is important to learn, and how learning takes place. There is evidence in England that whilst there was increased interest in global and sustainability themes in schools as a result of policy initiatives between 2000 and 2010, many schools responded by running one-off activities on areas as diverse as organising fundraising events for an NGO, selling Fairtrade products, developing a school link or having a one-off lesson on climate change (see: Hunt, 2012; Edge et al; 2009 Marshall, 2007). It is where global learning is part of the broader curriculum and ethos of a school that it has been most effective (Hunt, 2012).

Terms such as 'global citizenship' and 'education for sustainability' imply processes of change not only in the learner but also in society as a whole, as a direct result of the learning. Whilst there are dangers of the approach being used in a mechanistic manner, there is a clear assumption of a relationship between learning and social change. In the context of learning about global and sustainability themes this means going beyond the accumulation of knowledge or the development of specific skills to recognising the wider social context and implications of the learning taking place.

Learning about matters like climate change, global poverty, migration and gender inequality intersects with many other dimensions of experience on both individual and broader levels, including culture, personal identity (Alexander, 2004), motivation, power and inequalities. Illeris (2007:29) describes three dimensions of the learning process: content, incentive and interaction:

...all learning always includes three dimensions: the content dimension of knowledge, understandings, skills, abilities, attitudes, working methods, values and the like, the incentive dimension of emotion, feelings, motivation and volition, and the social dimension of interaction, communication and cooperation – all of which are embedded in a societally situated context (Illeris, 2008: 1).

Taking Illeris' model of learning into account, a pedagogical approach framed by an understanding of global and sustainability themes would:

- be located within a values base of global social justice;
- promote critical and reflective thinking;
- encourage the learner to make connections between their own lives and those of others throughout the world;
- provide opportunities for the learner to have a positive and active engagement in society that contributes to their own perspective of what a better world could look like (Bourn 2015:195).

Underlying this approach are a number of theoretical influences including Mezirow's concept of transformative learning, and systems thinking; Freire's perspectives on conscientisation and the cultivation of conscience (Freire, 1973); Foucault on power, and various writers on post-colonialism (see: Andreotti, 2012; Bourn, 2015; Brown, 2012; Bryan and Bracken, 2011; Ellis, 2015; Sterling, 2001). These theorists have come to permeate and influence practices in global learning and sustainability, particularly in relation to the recognition of power and inequality in the world, and the continued influence of colonial thinking through stereotypes and negative images of poor people in the world. A common thread between these theorists is their shared belief that the process of learning can be transformative in itself.

Addressing global learning and sustainability in a primary school requires a profound shift in teachers' pedagogical thinking in that whilst recognising increasing children's knowledge is important, it is how this new knowledge is presented to, as well as understood and received by, learners that makes it a distinctive area of learning. Above all it means recognising that the learners' own experience, outlook and socio-cultural background need to be recognised and responded to as part of the pedagogical process. When primary schools address concepts such as fairness, diversity, rights, and sustainability, links are made between local and global contexts and space is always provided for pupils to reflect on what they have learnt and to share their views with others (Hunt, 2012:77). Martin (2008) suggests that a global learning approach can also be used to ask and explore uncomfortable questions, challenge assumptions and recognise differences.

This pedagogical approach can be seen in the wealth of materials and initiatives promoted by civil society organisations with primary schools in the UK over the past decade. Tide~ global learning, an NGO based on a network of teachers, has produced a wide range of resources on global learning and primary schools including the *Global Learning in Primary Schools* resource which makes reference to the global not as 'out there' but 'here' where children live. This kind of approach enables children to make sense of the 'everyday complexity of the world in which they are living', to understand it and 'feel part of it.' (Tide~ global learning, n.d).

This emphasis on recognising different perspectives, voices and views about the world can also be seen in the resource produced by Development Education Centre South Yorkshire (DECSY) (Garvey et al, 2012) where activities related to cultural diversity are located in a global context. Primarily aimed at the Early Years Foundation Stage, activities are promoted that include puppet making, story-telling and beadwork. Among the themes addressed are activities that encourage younger children to:

- see themselves and others as special
- enjoy learning about one another's lives
- appreciate similarities and differences between their own lives and those of others in the group and the wider world
- begin to be able to put themselves in the shoes of other children in their settings, local area, and across the world
- begin to appreciate how their daily lives are connected to other people's lives around the world, and to the environment
- begin to think critically and creatively to make choices and decisions about their own lives (Gravey et al, 2012).

*Failte Malawi*, produced by ScotDEC (2011) is another example of an educational resource supporting global learning. This resource explores similarities and differences between children's lives in Malawi and Scotland, through looking at homes, games, food, farming and water provision. The pack also places an emphasis on children's rights and seeks to challenge the stereotypes and perceptions that many UK children may have about the lives of children in African countries.

Many global learning resources share similar pedagogical approaches that involve active participation and discussion. Philosophy for Children (P4C), for example, uses a dialogical approach to learning and its popular resources include materials focused on global issues, looking at issues from different viewpoints and encouraging critical thinking. Cheshire DEC worked with P4C in their 'Thinking Global' project which produced resources to:

Develop children's critical thinking skills by encouraging children to look for connections to their own lives, to think about solutions to problems, and in turn to be motivated by the experience to act for change locally and globally (CDEC, n.d: 2).

In the environmental domain, the Forest Schools movement aims to inspire children to become 'ambassadors for nature and champions for wellbeing'. The Forest Schools, which have emerged over the past 15 years as a popular form of outdoor educational provision in the UK, encourage engagement with the natural environment, giving children opportunities to experience the natural world at first hand. Evidence of the impact of Forest Schools suggests they can also help to support children's well-being, resilience and confidence (Blackwell, n.d.).

These examples demonstrate that despite a lack of clarity in some of the terminology associated with global and sustainability themes, there is evidence of a distinctive array of pedagogical approaches which represents far more than simply learning about the environment or faraway places. Many of these approaches also employ a wide range of creative teaching strategies such as drama, role play and opportunities for critical self-reflection.

## **5 - CURRENT INITIATIVES IN GLOBAL LEARNING AND SUSTAINABILITY**

While funding for sustainable development and learning about global and development issues has changed in recent years, a number of important initiatives have been sustained in primary schools across the UK. Some initiatives continue to be government funded, whilst others are run through NGOs and civil society organisations, often with financial contributions from the schools themselves. They all require the school to be active in setting up the links, and as such heavily rely on individual champions to drive the global learning and sustainability focus within the school.

The following summary outlines some of these ongoing initiatives in primary schools. Many of these projects and programmes have a global learning and/or sustainability framework that provides schools with a template of possible activities and actions (Hunt, 2012). While the list is not exhaustive, it offers an overview of some influential initiatives in schools around the UK.

## **DFID-funded support to schools**

The UK government, through DFID, currently funds two major strategic programmes which support learning about global issues within schools: the Global Learning Programmes in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and the British Council's Connecting Classrooms programme.

### *Global Learning Programmes*

There are four separate Global Learning Programmes, running in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland; and while each programme is tailored to the educational priorities in that country, there are commonalities across all four programmes. Each programme

- involves a consortium of organisations, including educational consultancy bodies with NGOs and subject-based associations, delivers each of them. Bodies with expertise in development education are part of each consortium.
- promotes a whole school approach to global learning (Hunt and King, 2015) where global learning is part of the wider school ethos.
- has a specific focus on learning about issues such as global poverty; and encourages looking at development issues through different lenses and perspectives.
- is focused specifically on key stages 2 and 3 with the aim of reaching 50% of all state schools within each country.
- has a focus on the professional development of teachers through a range of training opportunities, with the aim of developing confident and skilled teachers who improve teaching and learning about global issues in their school.
- is based on schools taking the lead on delivering global learning, with support provided by civil society organisations.
- has a remit to engage schools that have not previously engaged actively in whole school global learning programmes.
- aims to make links to other educational initiatives, particularly those led by civil society organisations, on specific themes such as children's rights, Fairtrade and Eco-schools (GLP Wales, n.d.; IDEAS, n.d.; GLP-E, 2015).

The individual country's programmes also have specific aims:

- In Scotland and Wales, the programmes aim to demonstrate links to broader educational strategies that incorporate sustainable development.
- In Northern Ireland, the focus of the GLP is more closely linked to global citizenship (Centre for Global Education, n.d.).
- In England there is an emphasis on learning about global and development issues and a specific focus on encouraging a process of learning that moves learners from 'a charity mentality to one of social justice'.
- GLP-England uses a hub and spoke model of engagement, whereby lead schools (called Expert Centres) run a network of local schools to support teacher development.

### *Connecting Classrooms*

The British Council's Connecting Classrooms programme began as a way of supporting international partnerships, but more recently it has become an international professional development programme. The aim is to reach 45,000 teachers and 12,000 school leaders worldwide by 2018, to encourage them to integrate a range of core skills into the curriculum, with a focus on:

- digital literacy
- critical thinking and problem solving
- creativity and imagination
- student leadership
- collaboration and communication
- citizenship (British Council, 2015a).

This programme also makes reference to the International School Award and provides some support for school linking initiatives. This programme continues to offer online courses on topics which include Education for Global Citizenship and these are being cross-linked to the new Core Skills courses.

### **NGO and civil society support to schools**

Across the UK, international and non-governmental organisations have been major drivers of global learning and sustainability in schools. Networks such as Sustainability and Environmental Education (SEEd) and Think Global operate as membership bodies supporting organisations' engagement in these areas. Organisations include bodies such as Oxfam, RSPB, WWF, Send a Cow, Christian Aid, Field Studies Council, Development Education Centres, Tide~ global learning and UNICEF. As already indicated in this report, such organisations have historically played a leading role in the UK in supporting schools and teachers, and have also provided pedagogical approaches that resonate with many of the Cambridge Primary Review Trust's recommendations and priorities.

### *Sustainable Schools Alliance*

The Sustainable Schools Alliance (SSA), coordinated by Sustainability and Environmental Education (SEEd), organises the Sustainable Schools Initiative in schools in England. This initiative had UK government support up to 2010 through DEFRA and DfE but since then, government financial cutbacks have led to civil society organisations being required to take forward the sustainable development agenda in schools. The vision of the Alliance is that:

Every child and young person experiences teaching and learning that enables them to feel safe and cared for in a changing world, where they want and are able to live sustainably and encouraging others to do the same (Sustainable Schools Alliance, 2014).

The SSA promotes the National Framework for Sustainable Schools to guide schools to become sustainable. Eight 'doorways' or sustainability themes act as entry points for schools



to establish or develop their sustainability work: food and drink; energy and water; travel and traffic; purchasing and waste; buildings and grounds; participation and inclusion; local well-being; and the global dimension.

Despite the lack of government financial support in England for sustainable schools since 2010, the national framework and eight doorways continue to be very popular with many primary schools. In some regions and counties of England networks of schools and civil society organisations continue to promote sustainable schools. For example, the Devon Education for Sustainability Working group (DESWG) states that it:

...is committed to the principle of education being a transformative and socially critical process. It takes the leading role in Devon in advising local authorities and supporting teachers and others to recognise the importance of environmental education and sustainability as a mechanism for lifelong learning, school improvement and personal empowerment (DESWG, n.d.).

### **Award programmes**

One of the most influential aspects of civil society and government supported programmes across the UK has been the emergence of awards and recognition schemes on themes related to global learning and sustainability. Whilst some of these award programmes can lead to a 'tokenistic' approach to teaching on global and sustainable issues, they can be highly effective as catalysts to schools' engagement in these areas of learning and important promotional tools to showcase the work schools are doing for the local communities they serve.

### **Subject associations**

Educational bodies with a specific focus on a particular subject area are important contributors to learning about global and sustainability themes in the classroom. The role of subject associations has become increasingly important in the wake of reductions on the availability of local authority advisory services. In relation to global learning and sustainability, the following associations have produced influential material for schools:

- Association for Citizenship Teaching (ACT)
- Association for Science Education (ASE)
- Geographical Association (GA)
- Historical Association (HA)
- National Association for Teaching of English (NATE)
- National Association for Teachers of Religious Education (NATRE)
- Personal, Social Health and Economic Education (PSHE) Association
- Royal Geographic Society (RGS)

Whilst it is beyond the scope of this report to review the full range of educational materials produced by subject associations in the UK these brief examples serve to illustrate the kinds of resources currently available. The Geographical Association, for instance, has given a high profile to learning about global and sustainability issues through a range of resources and publications. The Association is a partner in the Global Learning Programme in England and

Wales, and the Primary Geography Journal featured a special issue on global learning in summer 2015. The Association for Citizenship Education has also placed an emphasis on global learning, recommending in its support materials for Key Stage 2 that, ‘pupils might investigate living in a diverse world through the lens of questions about identity and diversity, similarity and difference and the connections between their locale and other places, nationally and internationally’ (ACT, 2014).

Similarly, the Association for Science Education expresses a strong commitment to global and sustainability themes, through its Science Across the World programme, and in various policies, guidance material and resources on environmental and sustainability matters (ASE, 2014).

## **6 - GLOBAL LEARNING AND SUSTAINABILITY IN ENGLISH PRIMARY SCHOOLS**

This section examines some examples of innovative educational practice relating to global learning and sustainability: the case studies identified in this section have been selected to represent some of the broader pedagogical approaches described in earlier sections of this report.

### **How are schools responding to global learning and sustainable development?**

The extent to which schools, and individuals within schools, engage with global learning and sustainable development varies. Some have developed a whole school approach to global learning and sustainability whereby these themes are embedded within the school’s ethos and runs through the entire teaching and learning programme. For others, the focus is more narrowly conceived with an emphasis placed on specific themes (such as waste recycling or Fairtrade), subject areas or events.

Recent research in primary schools gives us further information about the extent of global learning and sustainable development coverage, why schools get involved and what is valuable about these areas in terms of securing pupil engagement. Hunt and Cara’s report on the Global Learning in England Programme noted that primary schools became involved in the Programme for the following reasons:

The most prominent reasons respondents give for wanting to participate in global learning are to: develop pupils’ active citizenship, responsibility and voice; develop pupils’ interest in other countries and cultures; and develop pupils’ values. (Hunt and Cara, 2015)

Schools’ initial engagement with sustainability themes is often based on encouraging greater experience with the natural environment, particularly for children from inner cities (Pointon, 2014).

Evidence from these two research studies suggests that primary schools often tend to prioritise global and sustainability themes which foster a more empathetic approach, rather than looking at more critical and controversial issues, such as injustice, inequality and causes

of environmental degradation (Andreotti, 2006). It could be argued, however, that a school might start with the 'softer' areas with younger children and move on to more complex issues with older children.

According to earlier research by Hunt (2012) learning about culture and diversity are the most prevalent themes for global learning in primary schools, followed by learning about global citizenship and human rights. Conversely, the same research identified learning about areas such as conflict resolution and peace education, international development and social justice as being less common in schools. It has been widely noted in research studies that teachers feel less comfortable or able to teach complex and controversial topics with primary-age pupils (Mundy and Manion, 2008; Oberman et al., 2012; Sebba and Robinson, 2010).

While there is little consensus about the age at which to introduce areas of global learning or sustainability, primary age pupils are generally aware of, and concerned about these issues as suggested in evidence from the Cambridge Primary Review Community Soundings report (Alexander and Hargreaves, 2007). There is also substantial research demonstrating that young children have capacities for reasoning and discussion of complex or controversial topics (Osler and Vincent, 2003). With regard to cultural diversity, research indicates that while children begin to develop prejudices at an early age, they also start to understand concepts of fairness, empathy and justice early on too (Ruane et al., 2010; Oberman et al., 2014; Beck, 2003; Smith et al, 2003). Advocates for early intervention suggest it can challenge negative stereotypes before they become entrenched and provide a scaffold onto which more complex themes can be added at a later age or stage of schooling.

Wider themes that emerge are the motivations and outlooks of specific members of staff, and the influence of school leaders (Heuberger, 2014). Research in primary schools suggests that individual teachers or head teachers are often the major driving force of global learning in schools (Hunt, 2012). Support for global learning and sustainability has therefore relied heavily for its successful implementation and influence in schools on individual champions, teachers who are passionate, committed and enthusiastic about these issues. Initiatives like the Global Teachers Award and the Global Learning Programme draw on this, building the expertise of individual teachers who can then cascade their expertise to other teachers within their schools. In the absence of policy support for global learning and sustainable development in primary schools in England, individual champions are becoming increasingly important. Barrett et al (2014: 231) make this point in relation to education for sustainability (EfS):

The development of EfS is now ... largely a matter for individual settings to decide upon, thus depending on staff commitment to EfS and the contribution of EfS champions. The champion can be from the staff, children, parents or other community members...

The emphasis on individual champions can lead to a lack of engagement from the school as a whole, however, and if an enthusiastic teacher moves on, the involvement in global and sustainability themes within the school can disappear. Continued involvement of the school requires senior management support and ongoing professional development for all staff. On the other hand, the demands on staff time and the need to focus on core subjects are seen to

be barriers for schools to engage in global and sustainable issues, alongside a sense that these areas are seen as add-ons rather than integral to the curriculum (Hunt, 2012).

### Case studies

The following three case studies are presented as examples of innovative, current practice in English primary schools on global learning and sustainability themes. These three English schools, located in differing geographic locations, have adopted distinctive approaches to global learning, and their differing strategies have resulted in varied kinds of impact on the children and wider communities they serve.

#### Case study 1: Hawkshead Esthwaite Primary School

**Location:** in a conservation area in the Lake District, England. The school has extensive green space including a wildlife and garden area.

**Children:** 64 pupils in school.

**Staff:** part time teaching and administrative staff, full time head teacher.

#### Background to global learning and sustainability:

- Almost ten years' involvement with global learning and ESD
- In 2006 global citizenship introduced as a new area of study to Years 5 and 6.
- 2007-2010 school participated in the Connecting Classrooms project linking them with schools in Ghana and South Africa.
- Projects on Sustainability and Waste, Composting and Recycling, Belonging and Identity and Values and Attitudes have been just a few of the areas covered over the years.

*"In a Belonging and Identity project, pupils considered their place in Hawkshead, Cumbria, the North West of England, England, the UK, Europe and the World. They built shelters and furnished them with items from the areas they came from and personal objects. They discussed what gave them a sense of belonging, learnt about refugees and what it felt like to have a home destroyed".*

(Hawkshead Primary School, 2015)

#### Focus on global learning and sustainability development

**Whole school approach:** global themes are embedded across the school. This involves both the formal and informal curriculum, including areas such as Citizenship, the outdoor classroom, Forest Schools, local community links and Philosophy for Children (P4C).

**Interdependence:** aims through assemblies and school ethos to encourage

an approach to learning that recognises we live in an interdependent world where we need global knowledge and skills to help us understand what is going on in the world around us and how events and changes impact on each of us and our environment.

**Values and attitudes:** aims to develop values and attitudes in children that are both outward looking and community-focused, developing an understanding of their place in the wider world and how they can make a difference. Within curriculum teaching there is a strong values component, which includes learning about fairness, justice and injustice, respect and responsibility and a belief that everyone can make a difference.

**Skills:** pupils are encouraged to develop skills to reflect, think critically, solve problems, be creative and work together.

**Staff development:** At least 50% of staff have visited Africa and helped to provide CPD on global learning for staff in the link school in Ghana.

**Involvement of local community:** the local community and parents are aware of the school ethos and support the development of children as global citizens.

**Curriculum themes and topics include:** rainforests, development of human rights, local environmental projects and comparative studies of settlements.

**GLP England:** Hawkshead is a GLP Expert Centre, which acts as a hub school to support the development of global learning in other local schools.

**Impact on OFSTED inspection and SMSC:** The impact of this work can be seen in an OFSTED report in 2014: 'pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exceptional. They have a highly developed understanding of global issues and how they can make a positive impact on their local environment and beyond' (OFSTED, 2014).

**Sustained impact on children:** continued involvement of children in global issues at secondary school through a global ambassador's scheme.

Hawkshead Esthwaite Primary School is interesting because of its focus on integrating global learning with sustainability throughout the school. These themes are celebrated in the school's vision statement:

Our pupils are offered a varied range of learning approaches which include helping them to be confident and proficient using a range of ICT. They learn to respect and understand their environment now and into the future. They are encouraged to think about, care for, and respect other people. They will develop the skills, knowledge, values and attitudes needed to be pro-active, global citizens equipped for the 21st century, in an ever-changing world. They will grow up with the desire and ability to make a difference in the world at a local, national and global level (Hawkshead Primary School, 2015).

The school's successful approach to global learning and sustainability issues has been acknowledged as outstanding in a recent Ofsted inspection. This case study identifies some key elements underpinning its success, including:

- adopting a whole school approach to global learning and sustainability;
- emphasising the importance of values and skills, including more critical approaches to thinking and learning, with a focus on reflection and understanding concepts such as social injustice;
- using global learning and sustainability to develop life skills, such as working together, creativity and problem solving;
- linking to the local school community, including other schools, through global learning and sustainability;
- focusing on the importance of staff development.

### **Case study 2: Canon Burrows Primary School**

**Location:** serves a diverse community in a mixed urban and rural area on the boundary of Tameside and Oldham, North West England. The school site is next to a stream which has been 'adopted' and maintained by the school as a nature reserve.

**Children:** 480 pupils, plus 40 nursery places in school.

**Staff:** Senior Leadership Team, over 20 teachers and a range of support staff.

**School ethos:** The school has an ethos of care which permeates all aspects of its work and is captured in the school's aims statement: 'Care for oneself, care for each other and care for the world'.

#### **Focus on global learning and sustainability:**

- Environmental work started over 30 years ago in the school.
- School weaves together strands of sustainability and global learning within a cross curricular approach.
- Spaces for children to engage include an active school council, an Eco committee.
- Identified sustainability coordinator, but all staff and pupils are involved in aspects of decision making related to global and sustainability themes.
- School has a nature reserve, cared for and maintained by staff, friends and pupils. Children are involved in designing a garden.
- Takes part in a range of local environmental projects.
- Takes part in an eTwinning scheme.

**GLP England Expert Centre:** acts as a hub school to support the development of global learning and sustainability in other local schools.

#### **Eco School assessment:**

*Canon Burrows is an amazing example of what can be done, in an era of change in schools, budget restraints and overloaded curriculum driven by academic targets. The children have an*

*excellent start at becoming environmentally aware, how to keep healthy and emotionally sound. They have the makings of being good citizens for the future ...*  
 (Eco school assessor's confirmation letter of Canon Burrows being awarded Green Flag Status).

The school's approach exemplifies the arguments put forward at the beginning of this report on the need for holistic pedagogical approaches in teaching for global learning and sustainable development. Its policy on ESD emphasises the centrality of this pedagogy:

What is of equal importance to the content of ESD is the way in which it is delivered. In this respect children will be encouraged to:

- listen to other points of view
- express and justify their own points of view
- make informed choices between alternatives
- work collaboratively through discussion and negotiation
- respect democratic decisions
- think critically
- take responsibility for their own actions
- participate responsibly in school- and community-based activities (Canon Burrows, 2015).

### **Case study 3: Houndsfield Primary School**

**Location:** an urban area in Edmonton, London Borough of Enfield. Houndsfield Primary School is part of The Field Federation, and is partnered with Churchfield Primary School, Enfield.

**Children:** 3 form entry primary school, 666 pupils on roll, and 60 places in the nursery. The majority of pupils (70%) have English as an additional language, with more than 42 alternative first languages spoken at home. 36.4% of pupils receive Pupil Premium funding and 23.5% receive Free School Meals.

**Staff:** The senior leadership team includes the head teacher, 2 deputy head teachers, 2 assistant head teachers, inclusion leader, federation EAL leader and assessment leader. There is a strong middle leadership team of phase and subject leaders. In total there are 80 staff members – 31 teaching staff and 49 support staff.

#### **Schooling priorities / guiding ethos:**

- Children are developed into global citizens; social justice is at the heart of the curriculum.
- Children are taught values through a rights-based approach. The UNICEF Rights Respecting School award underpins the curriculum, behaviour systems and all policies.
- Inclusive practice is paramount at the school; including quality provision for pupils with EAL and SEN.
- The school partners with a variety of international linking partners to engage in CPD projects and twinning work.

- Houndsfield Primary School has been a Global Learning Expert Centre.
- Quality first teaching is developed through staff enquiry-based research.

### **Focus on global learning and sustainability:**

**Whole school approach:** Global learning and sustainability are integrated throughout a social-justice focused Federation curriculum. The school adapts the National Curriculum to teach social justice issues including globalisation, poverty and development. Sustainability is also embedded within topics such as deforestation and global warming/climate change, providing children with a critical approach to global learning and ESD.

**Rights Respecting Schools Award:** The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is embedded throughout school practice including within the curriculum, all policies and within pastoral support work. Pupils learn about rights both discretely in independent rights-focused lessons, as well as through an integrated approach to the Field Federation's social-justice focused curriculum.

**School leadership:** The senior leadership team has promoted global learning and sustainability education as a whole school improvement priority. The school has identified a global learning coordinator with the leadership title of 'Learning to Live Together Leader'.

**Pupil Voice:** At Houndsfield Primary School there are a variety of ways in which pupil voice is incorporated into school life. These are: the elected School Parliament; Field Federation Ambassadors; Houndsfield Primary School Radio; and pupil focus group discussions on rights.

**School environment:** Sustainability is explored with the children through the school farm and allotments, cared for and maintained by staff, friends and pupils. Children are involved in growing fruit and vegetables, collecting chickens' eggs and looking after the animals.

**International linking projects:** The Field Federation has partner schools in Sierra Leone, Turkey, Finland and Spain that they have worked with in a variety of ways including school exchanges with Madrid. Two examples of this work are included below:

**Sierra Leone** – The school has been involved with school linking in Sierra Leone since 2010 and teacher exchanges have taken place throughout the last five years. Children at Houndsfield Primary School learn about their partner school in Sierra Leone through the curriculum as well as on special focus days. Children are taught about sustainability through the creation of the Tamaraneh Poultry Farm Project, which aims to collaboratively develop an income generating poultry farm in the community in which the partner school is situated.

**Turkey** – As part of an EU Comenius project, Houndsfield Primary School worked to raise the achievement of Turkish children. With partners from the University of Ankara in Turkey, Enfield local authority and University of Middlesex, staff at The Field Federation developed stronger links with Turkish parents and community and discovered new and innovative ways to support Turkish children in their classes. A teacher from the Federation involved in



the project talked about the impact of the project on her practice and the importance of having a strong relationship between home and school based on mutual respect, and between teachers and Turkish children in their classes.

**Global Learning Programme Expert Centre:** Houndsfield Primary School is a nationally recognised Global Learning Programme Expert Centre as part of the GLP, acting as a hub school to support the development of global learning and sustainability in other local schools. One school in this network has now developed to become an Expert Centre itself.

The Field Federation, of which this school is a part, places a strong emphasis on developing children who value and respect themselves and others, who love learning and have a deep sense of fairness and social justice. As their executive headteacher has stated:

We aim to equip children to lead full and rewarding lives, contributing positively to the society in which they live. Everyone in the Field Federation works as a team to ensure that all our children are given the best possible opportunities to experience success with their learning, achieve the highest standards in all they do and develop the confidence to strive for a fair and just society (Field Federation, 2015)

The whole school approach has been a particular feature of the head teacher's support for global learning:

Our aim is to develop in children the idea of taking action with, rather than doing things to or for people, and learning from other children and young people in our school, our local, national and international community' (Ibid.).

The impact of the use of a rights and social justice approach within the school can be seen through the decrease in negative behaviour, and the increase in pupils' awareness of their rights, allied with an increasingly critical approach to evaluating the rights of other children around the world.

## 8 - EVIDENCE OF IMPACT

### Main criteria for assessing impact

There is a growing body of evidence on the impact of global learning and sustainability in primary schools. This evidence often focuses on areas of interest to the funding organisation or the supporting civil society organisation involved which might, for example, measure impact in terms of environmental behaviour change, or on young people being more active global citizens, or identifying their contribution to eradicating global poverty. There is less evidence about the impact of global learning and sustainability on teachers' and pupils' broader knowledge and skills.

The focus of this section of the report is largely on the impact of global learning and sustainability development in primary education in England in relation to its learning goals

and objectives. This evidence largely comes from evaluations conducted by NGOs and specific initiatives, such as UNICEF (Sebba and Robinson, 2010) and the Eco-Schools programme (Keep Britain Tidy, 2013), and from academic research (for example, Hunt, 2012). There has also been evidence gathered from projects led by Development Education Centres (Barker, 2013; Lowe, 2008; Coe, 2007) evaluations of school linking and partnership programmes (Sizmur et al, 2011; Hirst et al, 2014; Bourn and Cara, 2012), and of specific educational interventions (Oberman et al, 2014; Alcock and Ramirez Barker, 2016). Nicholas et al (2010) and ESTYN (2014) provide evidence of impact from a national initiative to support education for sustainable development and global citizenship in Wales; and Barratt Hacking et al (2010) provide evidence of the impact of sustainability initiatives across schools. Some studies are small-scale and largely qualitative, looking at the impact of a particular intervention in one school (Tanswell, 2011; Alcock and Ramirez Barker, 2016), whereas others use mainly qualitative data in response to specific interventions across a small number of schools (Barker, 2013; Lowe, 2008; Sebba and Robinson, 2010; Nicholas et al, 2010; Clarke and Carter, 2010; OFSTED, 2009; Gayford, 2009). A range of studies involve larger-scale, often quantitative mapping of the impact over a period of time (Hunt and Cara, 2016; Sizmur et al., 2011; Hunt, 2012; Keep Britain Tidy, 2013; Hirst et al, 2014).

Evidence from these studies varies in terms of context, focus and methodology. Some studies rely on retrospective perceptions of impact (e.g. Hunt, 2012; Keep Britain Tidy, 2013), rather than a comparative analysis between baseline and impact data (Lowe, 2008); and few use control groups (for exceptions see: Hirst et al, 2014, Sizmur et al, 2011). In many cases there are issues with identifying causal links because of the range of influences within and outside schools (Hunt and King, 2015). Moreover, many of the impacts of global learning cannot be seen immediately, but might be more evident over time, after evaluation data have been collected.

There are more informal bodies of evidence on impact: for example, documenting materials produced and projects undertaken by NGOs. The work of Tide~ global learning, for instance, shows that many schools in the West Midlands are actively engaged in global learning and sustainability practices. However few NGO projects have been independently assessed in relation to pedagogical practice. Many projects undertaken by NGOs have been reliant on funding from bodies whose main interest is impact in increasing support for aid and development, or behaviour change with regard to the environment.

The rest of this section focuses specifically on the evidence in terms of impact of global learning and sustainability on the school as a whole, its teachers and pupils. This enables conclusions to be made about the relationship between learning about global and sustainability themes and wider pedagogical questions that have been key the material produced by CPRT.

### **Impact of global learning across the whole school**

A range of studies look at the impact of global learning and sustainability within primary schools on a holistic basis; and research suggests that more embedded approaches tend to produce higher levels of impact (Hunt and King, 2015; Sizmur et al, 2011; Gayford, 2009; Hunt, 2012). OFSTED noted, for example:

In the most successful schools, sustainability was an integral element of a well-planned curriculum and all staff, not just a dedicated few, saw it as their responsibility to develop it. As a result, it imbued the culture of the school (OFSTED, 2009: 4).

There is also research evidence of positive impacts on community cohesion (Hunt, 2012; Clarke and Carter, 2010), school ethos (Hunt, 2012; Nicholas et al, 2010) and energy efficiency within schools (OFSTED, 2009). Sebba and Robinson (2010) indicate that involvement in the RRSA has led to fewer incidents of bullying in schools, but there is less direct evidence of impact on school relationships (teacher-student; student-student) in general (Hunt, 2012). The evaluation of the Eco Schools Award suggests a link between 'the adoption of sustainability as a guiding principle and the improvement of schools as a whole' (Keep Britain Tidy, 2013: 5).

Interesting analysis of research on the impact of RRSA (Covell et al., 2011; Sebba and Robinson, 2010) explores how global learning might counter the effects of social disadvantage in a school. On a smaller scale, Coe's (2007) evaluation of one school places great emphasis on global learning as the stimulus for improvement in a failing primary school.

It has also been noted that schools involved in global learning have slightly better than average ratings in Ofsted inspections (Hunt, 2012; Hunt and Cara, 2015). The majority of school leaders responding to an evaluation of Eco-Schools (Keep Britain Tidy, 2013: 10) thought their work with Eco-Schools had contributed positively to their inspection outcomes. There are examples of Ofsted inspections making reference to global learning as a way of improving pupils' learning. For example a recent inspection report for Buntingsdale Primary School in Shropshire stated:

The school uses global education themes very effectively to set pupils' learning in a worldwide context and broaden their views of the world. This makes the learning more relevant and interesting for pupils, and so it contributes to their enthusiasm for learning. (OFSTED, January 2015: 6).

Similarly, the Ofsted inspection for Egerton Primary School in Cheshire noted that the school's curriculum provided pupils with:

a wide understanding of the world around them as a result of the many trips, visits and clubs the school offers. The school is recognised as an Expert Centre for the National Global Learning Programme for its positive contribution to a globalised world within the school curriculum. This enhances pupils' lives and gives them an understanding of both the challenges and the wonders of the world. Pupils are rightly proud of the links the school has with a school in Kenya and enthusiastically and readily talk about it. (OFSTED, June 2015: 4)

### **Impact of global learning and sustainability on teachers**

In many cases the primary aim of global learning and sustainability projects is to support the development of teachers so they have stronger levels of confidence, knowledge and skills to

introduce global learning into their teaching, and in turn improve global learning outcomes for children (see, for example, GLP-E, 2015; Alcock and Ramirez Barker, 2016). Teachers are the primary focus of awards such as the Global Teacher Award and the Lead Practitioner Programme on the GLP in England, and a lack of appropriate professional development is highlighted as a contributing factor to teachers lacking confidence to teach the more complex concepts related to ESDGC in Wales (ESTYN, 2014).

Various studies map the impact of global learning and sustainability initiatives on teachers and their teaching. Unlike research on children, the focus tends to be on teachers' confidence and skills to teach these issues, rather than their own attitudes or behaviours towards global and sustainable issues. Barker (2013:3) describes how teachers have gained 'increased knowledge and skills, theoretical and personal development', as well as describing the growth of professional development communities within school.

A report by OFSTED (2009) claimed EfS was an important factor in improving teaching and learning within the school. This key study visited 14 schools over a three-year period and found that their focus on sustainability had a wide range of positive consequences. Importantly, the findings showed that sustainability was a significant factor in improving teaching and learning in these schools (DCSF, 2010: 3).

### **Impact of global learning and sustainability on children**

While various studies attempt to provide a link between global learning and sustainability, and improving pupil attainment, as yet there is no clear evidence to support this; and research points to the difficulties in attempting to prove a link (Nicholas et al., 2010). For example, while Sebba and Robinson (2010) state that nearly two-thirds of 31 schools involved in the RRSA raised their attainment over three years, it is not possible to attribute this directly to their participation in RRSA. Similarly, participants of the review of International Dimension in Education in Wales thought that children's attainment levels had improved, but Nicholas et al (2010) noted difficulties in ascribing this attainment increase directly to their global learning work. That being said, research points to anecdotal evidence of impact on pupils' attainment in some schools, where global learning works alongside other initiatives to support learning more generally (Hunt, 2012). For example activities on themes such as rainforests can be a very effective way of helping to improve levels of literacy through imaginative and creative teaching styles (Alcock and Ramirez Barker, 2015).

However, whilst there are some examples of research looking at the impact of learning on specific curriculum subjects (Bourn, 2012; Lambert and Morgan, 2011; Hicks and Holden, 2007), much of this research evidence is focused either on challenging perceptions about the developing world in global learning or on environmental behaviour and the value of outdoor learning.

It is through specific themes that the strongest evidence can be seen.

- Evaluation findings from the RRSA show children have a greater understanding of rights and responsibilities (Sebba and Robinson, 2010; Covell and Howe, 2008).

- School linking programmes support children's global awareness and understanding (Sizmur et al., 2011; Bourn and Cara, 2012).
- Global learning has a positive impact on children's understandings of poverty, international development and poverty reduction initiatives (Hunt, 2012; Barker, 2013).
- Children gained greater awareness of their natural environment (Keep Britain Tidy, 2013) and had increased knowledge and understanding of the importance of leading more sustainable lives (OFSTED, 2009).
- The ESDGC curriculum in Wales has had a positive impact on children's understanding of concepts of sustainable development and global citizenship (ESTYN, 2014).

There is also some evidence of how global learning supports pupils' engagement as active citizens both within and outside the classroom. Holden (2006) thinks primary age children locate their 'active' involvement in making the world a better place in three broad categories: environment (e.g. not dropping litter, recycling), action or campaigns (often linked to school fundraising), and relationships (fostering good relationships between people). Moreover, activities that require skills and practices that are possibly easier and more accessible for children come out stronger than those requiring potentially more effort or skill. So, for example, more children get involved in fundraising on a global issue than campaigning (Hunt, 2012). Often these are individual lifestyle choices or group-based initiatives; and most tend to be adult-mediated/initiated. For primary schools, areas where children tend to become actively involved include:

- Supporting the environment e.g. recycling, energy efficiency both in school and at home (Sebba and Robinson, 2010; Keep Britain Tidy, 2013; OFSTED, 2009).
- Buying FairTrade products (Sebba and Robinson, 2010; Hunt, 2012).
- Fundraising (Sebba and Robinson, 2010; Hunt, 2012).
- Participation in school committees e.g. eco-committee, school council (Keep Britain Tidy, 2013; ESTYN, 2014).

Research on global learning and sustainability provides evidence of impact on children's values. The values measured tend to focus on categories fitting with 'softer' notions of global citizenship, supporting a common humanity based on mutual respect and responsibility towards others. Data suggests children's involvement in global learning and sustainability initiatives can support their respect for diversity (Hunt, 2012; Sebba and Robinson, 2010; Hirst et al, 2014); empathy (Hunt, 2012; Sebba and Robinson, 2010); sense of fairness (Hunt, 2012); self-esteem and confidence (Sebba and Robinson, 2010; Covell and Howe, 2001).

## 8 - CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report has explored current provision, policy and research evidence on global learning and sustainability development in primary education across the UK. Children are growing up in a globalised world where the need to protect our planet and each other from the effects of environmental and human-driven catastrophe will increasingly dominate the agenda. To date, educational responses to these concerns have been limited with policy and schools

focusing largely on what additional knowledge children may need rather than a more fundamental rethinking of the purposes of education and the pedagogy required to enable the next generation to meet the challenges they will face in our planet's future. This report has found that there is an urgent need for primary education to focus on the purposes and aims upon which it is based, and particularly in relation to these fundamentally important concerns. As the Cambridge Primary Review Trust argued, primary education should aim:

To develop children's understanding of humanity's dependence for well-being and survival on equitable relationships between individuals, groups, communities and nations, and on a sustaining relationship with the natural world, and help children move from understanding to positive action in order that they can make a difference and know that they have the power to do so (Alexander, 2010: 198).

Learning about global and sustainability themes has been heavily influenced by the priorities of policy-makers and external bodies. International organisations such as UNESCO and the recent UN SDGs provide an important impetus to the support and rationale for schools addressing global and sustainability issues. But within the UK there is increasing divergence between the individual countries in their responses to these themes, with strong support from policymakers in Scotland and Wales, but diminishing official support in England. However, the Global Learning Programme, through DFID funding, has given a new and important impetus to learning about global themes in particular. This has been especially important in England given the declining interest from the Department for Education in these areas.

As the examples in this report have shown, schools are actively engaging with these issues but much of what takes place in schools is shaped by the agendas of development and environmental organisations which may largely reflect their own, specific aims and objectives. The plethora of award programmes, which has become a high-profile aspect of practice in recent years, could also lead to a rather uncritical approach to learning about specific topics such as fair trade or recycling.

At the same time however, what makes the global and sustainability area so relevant to the themes from the Cambridge Primary Review and the priorities of the Cambridge Primary Review Trust is that there is also evidence of practice with a distinctive pedagogical approach that is transformative and addresses societal needs. It is this pedagogical approach, built on the practice of many local organisations with a distinctive development or environmental focus that demonstrates a key theme of the Cambridge Primary Review regarding the links between childhood, society and education.

As this report has identified, many teachers and children value the opportunity to learn about global issues and are conscious of the importance of living in a sustainable world. Children are growing up in a globalised society. They need the skills and knowledge base to make sense of and effectively engage in this global and fragile world. They also need to be equipped with a values base that recognises concepts such as tolerance, respect, compassion, a sense of fairness and concern with social justice.

Global and sustainability themes have gained higher prominence in education over the past decade. This report has outlined the policy context, and the types of interventions available

for primary schools that have enabled this to happen. It has also outlined what we know about impact on schools, teachers and children. In particular it emphasises how global and sustainability themes interconnect and the importance of ensuring their continued support within schooling.

What has not yet been given significant consideration by policy-makers is the idea that learning about global and sustainability themes also pose wider questions about what should be taught, why these are important and how they can be taught within the classroom. For global learning and sustainable development to have real impact upon learners, they need to be taught in a way that challenges assumptions about the wider world, which engages them, and instils in them a sense that they can make a positive contribution to making the world a better place.

An increasing number of schools recognise the need to look at these themes in a more strategic way, to embed them across the life of the school. Throughout the UK, there is evidence emerging, as highlighted in this report, of schools moving from a series of unconnected activities in areas such as fair trade, recycling and school links, to having global and sustainability themes as a constant thread across the life of the school.

Much of this progress has happened, at least in England, despite the policies of the present UK government. What is needed is a more strategic approach that brings together all of the key stakeholders in education, to ensure that global and sustainability themes are at the heart of learning in primary schools, and not seen as an optional extra.

## **Recommendations**

In order for global learning and sustainability to continue to develop in schools, we make the following recommendations to policy-makers, practitioners and researchers:

- The UN Sustainable Development Goals provide a major new impetus to policy-makers in encouraging the societal relevance of learning about global and sustainable themes. All education ministries in the UK should be asked to demonstrate how they aim to address these Goals in their support for schools and education in their respective countries.
- Recognition is called for from policy-makers across the UK that learning about global and sustainability issues should be part of the everyday learning of all primary school children. This means not only including reference in the curriculum to themes such as climate change, global poverty and fair trade, but also encouraging approaches to learning which make reference to living in an interdependent world, recognising and valuing different perspectives and above all encouraging a critical approach to understanding the world around us.
- Financial resources should continue to be made available to enable schools to effectively engage with global and sustainability themes. Support to schools needs to enable children to critically assess what is happening in the world, allowing them to make their own judgments and craft their own responses.
- Learning about global and sustainability themes poses questions about approaches to teaching and learning in school. Therefore in calling for greater emphasis on these

themes in schools, policy-makers need to effectively resource practitioners to understand what a distinctive pedagogy for global and environmental social justice means, and how to implement it in the classroom.

- More research is needed to understand how learning about global and sustainable themes relates to children's education; in particular research into the processes of learning and how younger children can engage with complex issues in relation to diverse ages / stages of development.
- Above all there is a need for research on what effective pedagogy for global and environmental social justice looks like and on the impact it can have on children's learning and development.



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3. Goswami, U. (February 2015), *Children's Cognitive Development and Learning*.
4. Pickett, K. and Vanderbloemen, L. (September 2015), *Mind the Gap: tackling social and educational Inequality*
5. Bourn, D., Hunt, F., Blum, N. and Lawson, H., (\*February 2016), *Primary education for sustainability, global understanding and citizenship*.
6. Jopling, M. (\* February 2016), *Vulnerable children: needs and provision in the primary phase*.
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### Primary Colours

Alexander, R.J. (ed) (June 2015), *Primary Colours: Westminster postcards from the Cambridge Primary Review Trust*. An edited collection of CPRT blogs published between July 2014 and June 2015. View/download at [http://cprtrust.org.uk/about\\_cpirt/cprt-publications/](http://cprtrust.org.uk/about_cpirt/cprt-publications/).

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