



Guidance for good global citizenship education

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Every school is unique. And every school will interpret global citizenship and courageous advocacy in its own way. We do not expect any two applications for Global Neighbours accreditation to be completely alike and we celebrate a range of approaches. However, Global Neighbours assessors and Christian Aid staff have noticed that there are common pitfalls that can trip schools up. From this experience, we have produced some advice for schools to help keep them on track with good global citizenship and steer them towards successful applications.

School leadership

Do	Don't	Examples from successful applications	Examples from unsuccessful applications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take the time to actively reflect on and embed vision and values that have a genuinely global perspective. • Think about what you are doing to give priority to global citizenship education and provide opportunities for pupils to be courageous advocates for change – make sure that the approach has integrity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit an application form without clearly stating how the school's vision and values specifically impact on global citizenship. • Confuse this with an Ofsted or SIAMS inspection – this is specifically about global understanding. • Include things that are not relevant to global citizenship education in your application. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global Neighbours is on governors' agendas and this helps to keep this area of work a priority. • Leaders provide CPD opportunities for staff to enhance their understanding and practice of good global education. • Decisions across the whole school reflect global issues. For example, procurement, buildings and energy decisions reflect environmental concerns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools often copy and paste a vision statement without further explanation. This is rarely sufficient to explain how the school is embedding good global citizenship through school leadership.

Teaching and learning

Do	Don't	Examples from successful applications	Examples from unsuccessful applications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include a wide range of resources from different perspectives in teaching. • Encourage pupils to understand that they are active participants in the world and that their decisions and choices have global impacts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present stereotypical views of life or people in other countries. Avoid pejorative or potentially patronising depictions of people in other countries – even well-meaning ones. Specifically, steer clear of teaching that could leave pupils with an 'us and them' sense of global development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching about the rainforest touched on its importance for indigenous people and for the rest of the world in terms of biodiversity and climate; it explored the damage done through deforestation; it considered our own part in that through the consumption of palm oil. As part of pupil participation, pupils then looked at products that contain palm oil and petitioned a supermarket chain to stop stocking them. • Teaching about inspiring figures considered the impacts of a range of people, including Martin Luther King, Greta Thunberg and Nelson Mandela. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching about the rainforest was limited to learning about animals in the rainforest and the accompanying action was dressing up in green for a rainforest day. No information was given about how connections were made to the impacts on people, nor any links made to the interconnectedness of people and planet. • Pupils learned that children in a school overseas were 'in desperate need of help', with no further qualification of the complexities of the challenges they face.

Collective worship

Do	Don't	Examples from successful applications	Examples from unsuccessful applications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore global issues in collective worship that have been explored in the taught curriculum and vice versa. • Explain clearly in your application how the collective worship programme, style and content underpins global understanding. • Explain which global issues you explored during worship and what opportunities pupils had to respond to, reflect on and/or pray about this issue. • Tell us how collective worship informed action on global issues in your school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy and paste the weekly collective worship pattern into the evidence form (eg, 'each week we have a visiting speaker, hymn practice, class worship and celebration assembly'). We need to see specifically how this is allowing space and time for reflection on global issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examples of meaningful prayer and reflection in response to disasters and other global events. • Pupils have made pledges about lifestyle changes. • A joint act of worship on global issues with parents and the church can be really powerful. • Traditional services are viewed through a global and contemporary lens that takes account of modern day challenges (eg, climate change at Harvest and the far-reaching impacts of conflict and peace on Remembrance Day). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools simply state: 'The vicar comes in to school' or 'We invite parents in to worship'. This is not sufficient evidence of global learning. The same applies to Christian Union activities. • When reference is made to worship, but no context or detail is given, it is very hard to assess the impact or the global dimension.

Pupil participation

Do	Don't	Examples from successful applications	Examples from unsuccessful applications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make teaching and learning a springboard for action, rather than letting pupil action happen in isolation from understanding the complexities of the issue being addressed. • Ensure that pupils have applied critical thinking to fundraising and considered any possible limitations as well as benefits, plus other actions they could take. For more information, see our fundraising tips on p8. • Encourage pupils to think about actions they can take in their own community, but do ensure that these are relevant to the learning that has happened: 'think global, act local'. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over-emphasise fundraising as the main or only response that the school can make to global issues of injustice. If fundraising is done well it can make a huge difference to people's lives and help to deepen pupils' global understanding. However, that deepened understanding should also encompass the root causes of poverty and injustice, which will warrant a consideration of other actions they can take which address those. It will also avoid the perpetuation of unhelpful stereotypes that overstate the role of donors and understate the role and agency of people living in poverty in improving their lives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing to decision makers to petition them, eg, on plastic pollution, debt or climate change. Pupils have made pledges about lifestyle changes. • Lobbying local businesses for more sustainable practices (eg, lobbying school food suppliers about plastic, the amount of red meat on menus, food miles and Fairtrade). • Petitioning local businesses about single-use plastic. • Consider the possible consequences of any action. For example, could it actually harm the local economy, create tensions or issues that you might not foresee? • Ask: would I like it if someone did that for me? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We want to see schools prioritising actions that enhance long-term sustainable development, rather than actions that are simplistic and might not have taken full account of the impacts or stereotypes. For example, sending secondhand or unwanted items without knowing or asking if these items are required or useful (ie, assuming that people in developing countries must be so desperately in need that our cast-offs will be welcomed or necessary). • Sending physical items from the UK to other countries at great expense, when perhaps they could be sourced locally, is also something to watch.

Community engagement

Do	Don't	Examples from successful applications	Examples from unsuccessful applications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain clearly how pupils shared their global learning with the wider community and how they were invited to tackle the particular issue being shared. • Think about ways to go beyond just parents and carers to reach the wider community and hopefully make some positive impacts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use visitors randomly. Visitors can add value if they are part of a cohesive plan with proper links to the teaching and learning and/or collective worship you are doing. • Include random information that has no bearing on global citizenship (eg, eSafety and fire safety are very important, but not relevant here). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joined in with a local eco group to plant trees, a pollinator patch and vegetable plot in the church grounds. • Invited an MP or local councillor to come in and be asked questions. • In one school, the eco team is led by a group of parents. • Elderly people were invited to a Fairtrade coffee morning and the pupils shared their learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing news via a school newsletter can be useful, especially when articles are written by engaged pupils, but is not on its own sufficient evidence of community engagement. Also, it is only relevant to the application when the news being shared relates specifically to global learning. • Parents and carers attend class assemblies each term, but these have no relation to sharing global citizenship learning.

Top tips for successful applications

Successful applications are likely to:

- Leave the assessor with a clear sense that the pupils at the school are engaged in a really meaningful way with global issues; that they understand one or more global challenges in depth; that they have thought through a range of perspectives; that they understand what impactful action on this issue would look like; and that they are aware of avoiding stereotypes.
- Have links across criteria areas. For example, the themes explored in collective worship will be taken up in teaching and learning and given space for pupil participation, which could then be shared with the wider community. The elements here do not happen in isolation, but pupils are exposed to good global citizenship across their entire school experience.

Unsuccessful applications are likely to:

- Be vague, poorly written and lack sufficient detail for the assessor to really understand what has happened in school and what the impact has been.
- Include elements that suggest that the work on global citizenship might have actually reinforced stereotypes and misunderstandings about the world.

Broadly speaking, the golden rule is:

All evidence should clearly explain how the pupils in your school are being supported to be active global citizens with a good understanding of the shared challenges our world faces and the role they can play to address these.

Fundraising: a vital but complex tool in the fight against poverty

Christian Aid is a charity which funds work to tackle poverty and injustice in some of the very poorest communities on the planet. We also challenge the structures and systems that keep people poor. This work would not be possible without fundraising and the generosity of the thousands of churches, schools and individuals who support us. As a fundraising organisation, we are aware that raising funds is absolutely vital. But there can be pitfalls here too. Here are some tips to help ensure that fundraising enhances, rather than harms, global education.

Fundraising is hugely valuable to organisations seeking to alleviate poverty and injustice. It is also a really valuable way for pupils to respond to global issues and feel that they can effect change. But we do think it is important that pupils understand that often issues are complicated and that they do not assume that solutions to complex problems are purely down to gestures that they make. This can lead to a sense that pupils can be 'saviours' for people overseas and actually reinforce stereotypes that people living in poverty are hopeless, helpless and dependent on others. This is not the reality and it fails to acknowledge the complex issues that drive poverty and in which our own country might actually be a complicit actor, rather than a passive witness or active saviour (eg, trade issues, climate change, historical contexts or colonial legacy).

Christian Aid does not support fundraising models like shoebox appeals or child sponsorship – appealing as they are. We outline the reasons opposite.

Shoebox appeals really are a temptingly tangible way to make pupils feel that they are making a direct difference, but in fact this is also where they risk simplifying complex problems. Often, they present a rather simplistic solution to a much more complex problem and consequently children might not have the opportunity to consider the more difficult questions behind the issue and consider their own agency – or indeed, lack of agency. They might also cost a lot to transport overseas, when that money could more usefully and sustainably be spent on sourcing materials within that country.

Child sponsorship is a hugely successful fundraising model, but Christian Aid has never engaged in it. While it may be appealing for a donor to know that they are making a difference to a named child, there are often considerable drawbacks in this approach. One such drawback could be that a sponsored child might receive special treatment or more opportunities than peers in their community, which can be arbitrary, selective and divisive. Another is that funding one individual takes a lot of costly administrative work. We recognise that such schemes can vary in their approach and they can represent a compassionate desire to make a difference that we would fully support. We also recognise that they may bring joy, benefits and meaning for those giving and receiving. However, Global Neighbours assessors will be mindful that such schemes rarely promote a rounded view of the issues and injustices driving the needs they are seeking to meet and as such will not expect to see them as a central plank of a school's application for accreditation.

Christian Aid's approach to development

Christian Aid prefers to work with local partners (eg, community organisations based in the areas where we work) because they know their communities well, understand the issues there and what is most required to enact long-term and sustainable changes for the whole community. Sometimes this might involve setting up a women's group so that women have more of a say in decision making, or a sanitation programme to bring community toilets to a neighbourhood, or rebuilding a school that is in disrepair and providing a lunch programme to increase attendance, or providing flood defences for a village on the frontline of climate change. All of these examples would have benefits that are much more long-term and far-reaching than sponsoring an individual child within a community.

We understand that children really value tangible ways to contribute, which is to be welcomed and celebrated. However, an important part of learning about global issues is understanding that complex problems rarely have simple solutions, and that although people in our country might be relatively wealthy in comparison to some people in poorer countries, there are complex power dynamics to consider when making donations. Some questions to think about might be:

- Could there be any downsides to the sort of action we are taking?
- How would I feel if I was helped in this way?
- Will this donation help this problem?
- What aspects might it not help so much with?
- Is there any action I could take as well as donating?

Tackling stereotypes

Watch out for stereotypes! When they arise, make sure that they are challenged. Simply put: if children are left with the impression that everyone in a particular country is very poor or to be pitied, then that will probably have done more harm than good to their understanding of global citizenship. Try to counter this by explaining that poverty, wealth and inequality exist everywhere, including in our own country.

You could also confound their expectations by finding examples of wealth or urban development (eg, fancy hotels or office buildings) in the country they are learning about, so that they understand that the poorer communities they hear about are not representative of the whole country.

Try to ensure that they understand that people living in poverty are just facing difficult situations and emphasise the ways in which those people are dealing with those challenges, so that the recipients of aid are not presented as helpless victims.