

Hannah Boydon

Like many schools, we value the learning gained through promoting a global outlook and having international connections. We have evolved from penpal letter exchanges through eTwinning projects linked to curriculum areas like MFL or History, on to funded Erasmus Plus and Connecting Classrooms experiences.

Our early projects were mostly European in nature and very much focused on language learning or intercultural education. For example, looking at daily life and festivals, and celebrating our similarities and differences.

Once staff started visiting our partner schools in Europe through Erasmus Plus KA2 funding, or attending CPD alongside their European colleagues, **the profile of international work rose in our school.** An International Coordinator was appointed to drive our first Comenius project in 2015. Their role has been pivotal in moving the agenda forward.

The school had always participated in campaigns such as “Send My Friend to School”, alongside charity fundraising experiences such as Children in Need and Red Nose Day.

However, there was a **growing realisation that we needed to shift away from a charity mindset towards a global justice mindset** – we needed to find the causes of things, rather than repeating the same donation cycles year on year.

The comedian Henning Wehn’s bemusement at the Brits as we sit in baths of baked beans to raise much-needed funds crystallises our new perspective. He comments ...

“We don’t do charity in Germany, we pay taxes. Charity is just a failure of governments’ responsibilities”.

As a school, we have accepted that we need both – we need to help the people in immediate need, **but we also need to ask questions and find out why they are in need and what must change in order to improve their situation.**

Hannah Boydon is Deputy Head Teacher Mayflower Primary School in Leicester.

She delivers the History and Geography elements of the local SCITT programme.

She observes that there is still much work to do to enable teachers to engage with these ideas.

She is currently studying for an MA part-time in Development Education and Global Learning with the Institute of Education at UCL.



Why do we have foodbanks? -- John Ashworth MP responding to questions

We started to familiarise ourselves with the UN SDGs and to use these as a vehicle for our social justice learning. We have benefitted from training with [Lifeworlds Learning](#), and have subscribed to the [LYFTA platform](#) to support our teaching.

Our work with our European colleagues as part of our three-year Erasmus Plus KA2 “Thinking Allowed” Project focused in its third year on using the SDGs, in conjunction with our newly-honed critical thinking skills (Year 2 of the project), as an effective vehicle for promoting social justice actions.

Lifeworlds Learning delivered a couple of bespoke training sessions during our Erasmus project visits with our partners from France and Finland. These gave us context and practical ideas for delivering project work around the two SDGs on which we’d agreed to focus - #3 Gender Equality and #15 Life on Land.





We also worked on SDGs with our Nepalese colleagues, as part of the Connecting Classrooms through Global Learning programme, using the British Council Zero Hunger and Zero Waste resources as our starting point. LYFTA ran a training session for the cluster of 12 schools during the visit of our Nepalese colleagues to Leicester. Staff have valued the quality and power of the immersive learning platform and have used it to communicate key messages using meaningful and inspiring human stories from across the globe.

The power of such collaborative activities became clear when, on a visit to Nepal, one of the children asked us, in response to a comment made about a foodbank in Leicester:

“The UK is the 7th richest economy in the world, why are there hungry children?”

On our return to the UK, we shared this with our Year 6 children and they wanted to investigate further and invited our local MP in to school so that they could ask, on behalf of their friends in Nepal, why we had to have foodbanks in the UK.

However, none of this work was documented in our planned curriculum. Over the last 18 months, since the appointment of our Assistant Head with responsibility for the Curriculum, we have overhauled how we teach our foundation subjects and are moving towards a **Project Based Learning (PBL) approach.**

This allows our children to learn by actively engaging in real-world, meaningful projects. They follow a driving question to develop both their knowledge and their skills, and demonstrate these by creating an outcome - a public product or presentation for a real audience at the end. **When planning any PBL, we have agreed that the topic must contain active links to the Sustainable Development Goals, a live international element and Outdoor Learning experiences.**

We also felt it important to consider whether there are opportunities within the project to explore alternative perspectives and histories, with an eye on diversity and decolonising the curriculum.

An example of this is our Year 6 PBL **“How Fair is Trade?”** which focuses on the SDGs of Zero Poverty, Zero Hunger and Responsible Consumption. The international link is with a cocoa cooperative in Ghana and the children work in the school allotment to find out which food we can grow in the UK. COVID has slowed down the roll out of our PBL programme, but we are hopeful that we can regain the momentum in the Summer Term.

We are still on the journey. There is a long way to go. There is much work to do to make complex ideas more accessible

EQUALITY VERSUS EQUITY

In the first image, it is assumed that everyone will benefit from the same supports. They are being treated equally.

In the second image, individuals are given different supports to make it possible for them to have equal access to the game. They are being treated equitably.

In the third image, all three can see the game without any supports or accommodations because the cause of the inequity was addressed. The systemic barrier has been removed.

Visual. With thanks to ‘Advancing Equity and Inclusion’ A Guide for Municipalities, CAWI, Ottawa

