

Headley Park Primary, Bristol

Using global learning to inject awe and respect for the world into the school and community, Headley Park uses a curriculum-led approach to look at culture, sustainability and wider global issues. Developed by looking in before looking out, the school has taken an explicit, measured and structured approach, engaging passionate staff and building work slowly to ensure their whole school approach to global learning has strong foundations.

School motivations and ethos

The ethos of preparation for life runs deeply through Headley Park's philosophy for education, and inspiring learning is at the heart of what the school does. Driven by a strong moral purpose from the head teacher, Brian Walton, and governors, this means building aspirations, preparing pupils for change and helping to develop open attitudes and beliefs.

'We don't just care about SATS results, we genuinely care about a rounded education.' - *Neil Todman, governor*

Headley Park in context

Headley Park is an above average-sized primary school on the edge of Bristol. The majority of the pupils are White British and the area has few ethnic minorities. A lower than average proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals, and a lower than average number have special educational needs.

The world is therefore a key tool to inspire and challenge pupils through an exciting skills-based curriculum. Global learning is integral to this – exposing pupils to real-life issues, other cultures and ways of life, developing their own opinions and supporting them to take actions.

'There is a purpose in educating children for the world to allow them to be successful and have a better life. I think morally the only way that is going to happen is by how they develop and understand themselves in the larger world.' - *Brian Walton, Head Teacher*

This philosophy extends into the schools' wider community. With sometimes challenging local circumstances, building aspiration, openness and exposure to the wider world is seen as an important part of the school's mission to support pupils and their families more broadly.

'We can teach children certain things but actually it's that respect for themselves and respect for others that sees them through life.' - *Brian Walton, Head Teacher*

The structure of activities

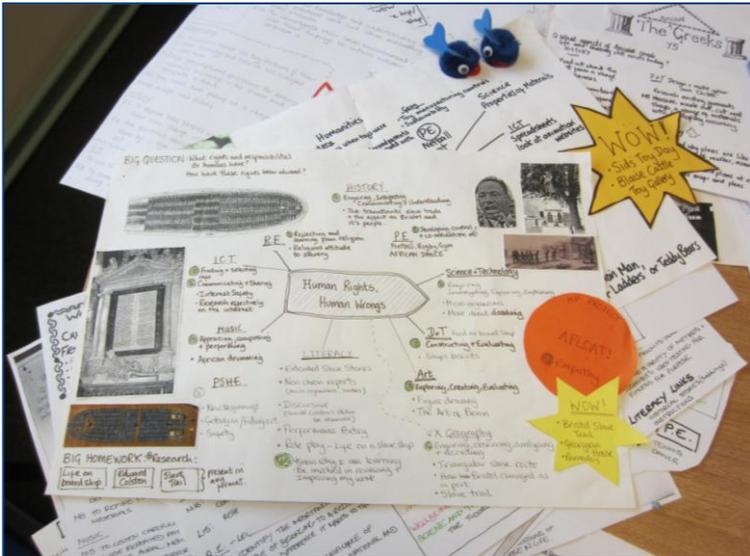
Headley Park's whole school approach means global learning has its foundations in simple, accountable structures, ensuring it's embedded into the curriculum and is delivered with the support of the entire school community.

Key to this approach are the Headley Park skills 'HP skills' which provide a shared reference point for all pupils throughout the curriculum. These are linked to Big Questions for pupils to consider, and together these frame any globally-focussed activities.

Headley Park skills

The school has a core set of skills that underpin the curriculum and ethos of the school.

They are: Plan, Persevere, Collaborate, Empathise, Creative, Manage, Responsible, Patience.



Curriculum planning from the Changing the World Team

Curriculum planning takes place within teams which are theme based. Teams meet weekly to plan assemblies, organise 'Big Days' and most importantly structure activities through the curriculum for all staff to follow. Central to this are 'Headley Park Projects' which are six week curriculum projects allowing the explicit development of Headley Park skills by addressing Big Questions.

Two of the teams which promote global learning are the Changing the World team and Culture teams. The Changing the World team deliver a variety of activities, for example activities related to the Fairtrade Foundation and the Send my Friend to School campaign.

The Culture team have reassessed how RE is taught in the school looking through the values lens exploring religion using a global cultural focus and pupil-led assemblies.

The team structure allows for consistency, sharing of resources, mutual support and confidence building. Perhaps most importantly it creates a structure of 'teacher friendly' accountability, through which work scrutiny takes place, and means that global learning happens without the need for a central 'coordinator'.

'It's been really refreshing being in a team where you can tell that people were really passionate about the subject that they were trying to promote and improve standards in. It makes you feel more confident and more accountable.' - Sarah Shelton, Year 2 teacher, Changing World team

Pupils at Headley Park are encouraged to actively pursue their interest with global issues. Through an environmental focus, the 'Eco' team engage with global sustainability issues and local action through gardening and littering projects. Pupils also consider local to global connections through running Fairtrade Fridays, and participating in the Live Below the Line campaign.

The school engages with a small number of external organisations to support global learning, in particular with the head teacher working closely with Think Global. The school also have a growing link with schools in Palestine through the Malago Learning Partnership, through which they intend to further develop global learning.

Big Days at Headley Park

Run by different teams on rotation, 'Big Days' crystallise whole school global learning. The Big Culture Day turned the school hall into an airport, where everyone met before jet-setting to different classrooms to explore countries. With their own Headley Park passport, pupils picked up a stamp from each class as they moved around the world discovering different cultures and religions. A Big Green Day, run by the Changing the World team with the school Eco team, enabled the school to explore environmental issues and promote sustainability.



Headley Park's global learning journey

Global learning began with the arrival of Brian Walton in 2006 as the new head teacher. Under his leadership the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) decided to review the school's identity and direction. They identified a weakness in the school's approach to RE teaching and a need within the community to incorporate an understanding of cultural diversity and encourage a deeper engagement with the wider world. The school restructured its approach around what they felt were key skills their own pupils needed – the 'HP skills'.



Pupils building a greenhouse from recycled bottles

The SLT also decided a new approach to the curriculum was needed to embed these skills and engage pupils effectively. This led them to draw on the skill sets and passions of the

teaching staff to organise themselves into curriculum teams based on their interests. For example, those interested in global and political issues formed the Changing the World team.

However, the SLT felt it was important to retain a learning focus so high profile 'flagship' projects such as school links and external awards were not initially pursued, preferring instead to focus on securing solid curriculum foundations relevant to Headley Park pupils and the local community.

As work has developed pupils' and teachers' interests have evolved, leading to deeper engagement with issues such as the environment and fair trade. With this solid foundation the school is becoming more interested in higher profile projects – for example they now have the Green Flag award – and are looking more actively for international school links.

The impact of global learning

Through establishing a highly engaging and creative curriculum, global learning at Headley Park has had a range of positive impacts.



By tackling world issues, the school has helped make 'alien' concepts seem less scary for pupils, developing a greater sense of curiosity and engagement. This helps pupils to 'grow into the world', and teachers say pupils are more motivated and open about what they are learning, with a 'thirst for knowledge'.

'We prefer learning global as it's more relevant to us. There's more practical stuff. It's much more interesting.' - *Headley Park pupil*

Pupils enjoy how learning through global topics brings life to core curriculum subjects that can sometimes feel tired, for example, exploring maths through fair trade topics. Pupils appreciate the skills developed through global learning, and teachers and the SLT recognise how this supports high levels of attainment across the school.

Learning about global poverty has also helped them think deeply and critically about issues, and challenged their perceptions about their own lives as well as those of others.

‘Sometimes it makes you feel shocked when you find out how people are living in poverty and how much money we spend on clothes and stuff that we don’t really need. It makes you think about the difference between want and need.’ - *Headley Park pupil*

Confidence shines through the pupils at Headley Park. Leading global projects and running their own agency has given pupils the opportunity to develop leadership and interpersonal skills. The enthusiasm is infectious, encouraging all pupils to want to get involved.

Global learning has also impacted significantly on pupils' openness and respect for others, a key difference noted by the head teacher Brian Walton since his arrival. The pupils' behaviour and listening skills have also improved benefitting in their transition to secondary school where they are more confident and more engaged with a wider range of activities.

‘We’re all equal at the end of the day. It doesn’t matter how much money you have, or what you look like, or what religion you have, we’re all equal.’ - *Headley Park pupil*

Being able to engage pupils with real issues they are passionate about has also had a positive impact on teachers. It helps to motivate and enthuse, and as Year 2 teacher Sarah Shelton says, it has given them ‘the whole world to play with’ to inspire pupils. Delivering global learning through a team approach has also helped contribute to a cohesive school atmosphere. This environment of mutual support and encouragement amongst all staff enables individuals to gain confidence taking risks, and provided an avenue for staff development.

‘It’s been really good for me to come into a school that teaches through this holistic approach... It’s also had a big impact on our support staff, bringing them into the curriculum teams and wanting to be part of it.’ - *Alexa Vickem, Year 4 teacher, Culture team*

Global learning has also helped Headley Park school engage their local community by show-casing global topics to parents and carers, gaining support and helping raise aspirations and attitudes towards the wider world. By showing leadership within the community, the school has been able to join together with other schools in a learning partnership to carry out sustainability focussed work. It has also worked closely with the local church on joint charitable activities, raising money for church projects overseas. This has helped reinforce the school's outward-looking stance in the wider community.

Key links from Headley Park

The Fairtrade Foundation
www.fairtrade.org.uk/

Eco-Schools
www.eco-schools.org.uk/

Send my Friend to School
www.sendmyfriend.org

Think Global
www.think-global.org.uk/

‘From a governor and parent perspective, seeing my kids and the kids here trying new things and being more open to difference has been very positive. Breaking down perceptions is a long-term project. It’s almost like if you can do that here, you should be able to do it almost anywhere.’

- *Neil Todman, governor*

Headley Park's advice for other schools

Decide as a school what you want to focus on – pick a lens and reflect this as a vision statement. Embed it in the curriculum and the structures of the school so it’s not tokenistic, which will have the biggest impact. Give pupils a voice, as helping them prepare for a world we don’t yet know is critical. Engage enthusiastic staff to champion it and *do it from the heart!*