

Kingsford Community School, Newham

With a focus on languages and internationalism, global learning at Kingsford has grown steadily over an extended period to now encompass a wide range of subjects and activities, linking the International School Award, expertise as a Confucius Classroom, and various opportunities for pupils' personal development. With a strong philosophy and a structured cycle of evaluation, the whole school approach at Kingsford is at the heart of the school's vision for engaging its pupils.

School motivations and ethos

The ethos at Kingsford Community School is one of aspiration and achievement for all pupils. For the head teacher, Joan Deslandes, this means creating a philosophy of 'Learning for Life', educating pupils for the world they are entering, for which global learning serves an essential purpose.

Therefore, preparing pupils as global citizens, developing their social and moral agency and their ability to understand and succeed in an interconnected international workplace, are key drivers to engage with global learning, often through a lens of international languages and work. Being a Confucius Classroom and promoting Mandarin and Confucius philosophy more broadly is central to this idea.

'Global learning brings a knowledge and awareness of the positive aspects of cultures around the world, the challenges that exist in terms of one's future life and work contribution, and how one may be able to contribute to finding solutions to international problems.' - *Joan Deslandes, Head Teacher*

In such a culturally diverse community as Newham, it is important for the school to create an environment of inclusiveness. Therefore promoting respect, exploring identity, developing empathy and cultural understanding is also a crucial part of Kingsford's approach to global learning, and its educational approach more widely.

'It's about being inclusive. We've have pupils here from all over the world. We want them to fully understand that they are British citizens and to value that, whilst also recognising the best in the culture that they bring and other cultures they encounter.' - *Joan Deslandes, Head Teacher*

The structure of activities

To Kingsford taking a whole school approach to global learning means that it is a normal part of what everyone does. As something the school values, it also means global learning is explicitly planned, coordinated, evaluated and quality assured, like any other school priority.

Kingsford in context

Kingsford Community School is a large, mixed secondary school in Newham, east London, the most ethnically diverse district in England. Over half the pupils speak English as an additional language. A high proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals, and a high number of have special educational needs.



Kingsford international work experience

Building a sense of internationalism and openness to the world is central to Kingsford's philosophy, and this extends to their careers education. Work experience is an essential element to building key transferable skills beyond the classroom environment. A third of Year 10 pupils every year undertake work experience overseas, which includes 20 pupils travelling to China for their work experience placement.

Consequently global learning is promoted through building an international dimension into the core curriculum through all subject areas, with annual reviews to assess impact. Learning coordinators integrate global issues and themes into schemes of work for each year group (particularly Years 7 to 9) focusing on the impacts on pupil progress and their social development. All teachers are then expected to integrate this into appropriate lessons, for example exploring HIV in Science or exploring development in Geography.

The school has an International School Coordinator as part of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), responsible for integrating the delivery of global learning, balancing core curriculum needs, supporting teachers and assuring quality throughout. For this, the evaluation framework from the International School Award is used to help assess impact.

Aside from the core curriculum, global learning is also present in the 'hidden' curriculum through cultural days, assemblies and school displays. Importantly, Kingsford also has a rich 'extended' curriculum, run through after school and Saturday morning activities which all pupils attend at least twice a week. This allows global learning to flourish in hands-on activities, such as the Model United Nations programme with Mulberry School for Girls as a lead, inter-school language competitions, poetry slams and international performances.

Kingsford's approach to internationalism means languages are a key avenue through which global learning themes can be explored. Pupils take part in three hours of language tuition each week, with language then used as a vehicle to explore cultural, economic and political issues, for example globalisation and the local development of the Docklands area.

‘As a citizen, the ability to understand and empathise is vital, and without knowledge of different languages and cultures such insight may be difficult to achieve.’-

Joan Deslandes, Head Teacher

Kingsford students pictured in Beijing having received a free visit to China following their victory in the HSBC sponsored National Mandarin Speaking Competition.



Kingsford's global learning journey

Since its launch as a new school in 2000, Kingsford has been driven by a desire to ensure the curriculum is relevant, purposeful and engaging for its diverse community, and the SLT recognised that an international focus was essential to that.

Therefore in 2002, inspired by China joining the World Trade Organisation and recognising the growing importance of the language in international business, Kingsford became one of the first schools in the country to add Mandarin as a core curriculum subject.

This helped develop the identity of the school, and brought wider benefits to the curriculum. Enabling the exploration of Chinese culture and philosophy helped open minds, foster a desire to learn about the wider world and develop the skills needed to engage with it successfully.

In 2006 the school began to engage with the International School Award, which helped to further motivate and engage staff in developing global learning approaches across the curriculum, considering impacts and strengthening links with the wider community. It also meant this became a key part of the School Development Plan and led to the appointment of an International Coordinator as part of the SLT.

This focus supported a number of teacher international visits to countries including Ghana, China and Canada, further motivating staff and achieving increased buy-in across the school for bringing international dimensions to learning.

In 2007, Kingsford became an official ‘Confucius Classroom’, with recognition from the Chinese Government. This led to extending work to include pupil visits and work experience.

The Confucius Classroom at Kingsford

Given its long track record in promoting the teaching of Mandarin and engagement with Confucius philosophy, Kingsford became an official hub for Confucius teaching in 2007, helping other schools who want to develop their own Chinese learning programmes. In 2012 the school won the award as ‘Best Confucius Classroom in the World’. The head teacher, Joan Deslandes (below right, collecting the award) describes the Confucius movement as like being part of an ‘international family’.



As teachers and pupils became more motivated, the school engaged with further projects, such as the Model United Nations programme, widening and deepening opportunities for global learning. The school continued to use the International School Award as a useful framework to help guide activities, and currently holds the Full Award. A testament to the embedded nature of global learning in the school was managing for a year without the International Coordinator who was away on secondment. This was achieved without any adverse effect.

‘There’s nothing unusual in the international dimension to our curriculum, because we’re part of the world. We are supporting our young people to be effective contributing citizens and to lead fulfilling lives. The knowledge our pupils gain through the international dimension of the curriculum makes this possible.’ - *Joan Deslandes, Head Teacher*



Kingsford students on the Great Wall of China as a result of their victory in the HSBC sponsored National Mandarin Speaking Competition.

The impact of global learning

Pupils at Kingsford are very positive about how the international dimension has impacted on them in a wide variety of ways.

Pupils say that learning about current events has opened their eyes and raised their mindsets beyond Newham, making them realise that the world is a big place for them to explore. They find learning about real and complex global issues motivating and enjoyable, building a willingness to learn and a desire to do so in a more interactive way. This enhances their academic skills, particularly related to communication, and lateral and ‘diagnostic’ thinking which supports work, for example in English, Maths, History and Geography.

‘Learning on the international scale allows us to broaden our horizons and understanding of different viewpoints, not just our own. It opens your eyes without you realising it.’ - *Kingsford pupil*

The opportunity to form opinions and discuss global issues, for example through the activities in the extended curriculum, has enabled pupils to express themselves more confidently and relate to a wide range of people.

Key links from Kingsford

International School Award

schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org/International-School-Award

Confucious classroom

[english.hanban.org/node_10971.htm](https://english.hanban.org/node/10971.htm)

Model UN at Mulberry School for Girls

www.mmun.org.uk/

Connecting Classrooms

connectingclassrooms-learning.britishcouncil.org

This supports their personal development, helping them to grow as 'unique' individuals and to stand out from others.

'You feel more immersed in the learning, and then you learn more. You want to delve deeper into the subject.' - *Kingsford pupil*

The international links and prospect of visits abroad helps build excitement and motivation in pupils. Being able to meet people from other cultures and ways of life, or learn more about them is of real value to pupils at Kingsford, building a sense of respect and inclusiveness across the school.

'Global learning takes you out of isolation and gives you a different perspective.' - *Kingsford pupil*

'The whole programme has clearly given many pupils a feeling of confidence and achievement.' - *The Independent newspaper*

Kingsford's advice for other schools

The most important thing is to think about the reasons to include global learning; what are the intended outcomes and how will this impact on progress and achievement? This should not only consider academic progress, but also the social and core skills development of pupils. Even if your school and community is not as diverse as ours, it's still critical to develop a broad perspective on learning and life for your pupils.