



Questions for reflection

- Do we provide enough opportunity for children to learn and take action on sustainable development?
- Are children able to plan or suggest their own changes in the school, local and global communities?
- Does our teaching on sustainable development include the human and global dimensions?
- Do school purchasing and waste policies demonstrate respect for the environment and human rights in their selection of ethical suppliers?
- To what extent is learning about and taking action for sustainable development integral to all aspects of school life?

Monitoring & Evaluation: how do you know it's working?

Pupils and teaching staff are increasingly able to:

- Express the importance of looking after the planet and how their actions can impact upon people in other parts of the world and vice versa
- Analyse daily actions in terms of potential impact on people now, as well as for future generations
- Pupils' self-esteem and confidence in the future grows with each personal experience of taking action on sustainable development, including with the global community in mind
- Make personal and school decisions that demonstrate an awareness of potential wider impact on other peoples and places

Next steps

- Audit opportunities for learning about and taking action on sustainable development and whether each opportunity is currently being placed in a global context
- Establish SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound) goals in response to audit outcomes
- Clarify which key members of staff will actively progress work towards each goal and in what ways
- Assess any training needs – for instance do members of staff feel confident teaching about or, in the case of non-teaching staff, incorporating into existing work (e.g. of the school bursar, facilities management) concepts of sustainable development
- Establish a date for review and reflection

Thematic Links

Global Footprints www.globalfootprints.org

2012 is the International Year of **Sustainable Energy for All**. Energy services have a profound effect on productivity, health, education, climate change, food and water security, and communication services. The year aims to raise awareness about the importance of increasing sustainable access to energy, energy efficiency, and renewable energy at the local, national, regional and international levels.

London Sustainable Schools Forum (LSSF): www.projectdirt.com/group/londonsustainableschoolsforum

Join the Forum to find out about initiatives across the capital and for support and advice from colleagues.

National College for School Leadership: The journey of sustainable schools: developing and embedding sustainability Report tinyurl.com/cr7nbo8

Sustainable development in action: A curriculum planning guide for schools www.globaldimension.org.uk/docs/qcda_sust_dev_in_action.pdf

UN decade of Education for Sustainable Development: www.unesco.org/education/tlsf/TLSF/decade/uncomESD_FS.htm

Teaching and learning for a sustainable future www.unesco.org/education/tlsf/index.htm

Eco-Schools Award: www.eco-schools.org.uk



Global Learning Centre

Tower Hamlets PDC
229 Bethnal Green Road, London E2 6AB
T. 020 7364 6405 E. hec@gn.apc.org
[@hecglobal](https://twitter.com/hecglobal)

Details of current teacher training, information on global learning and examples of HEC's work www.globallearninglondon.org.uk

Join the London Global Teacher Network - LGTN offers London teachers the chance to connect around global learning. www.lgtn.org.uk

Learning in a Global Context is a framework for supporting schools in preparing young people for life in an increasingly globalised world.



Learning in a Global Context was developed through Local4Global, funded by UK Aid.



Introduction

Sustainable development is a phrase often used yet not always with a shared understanding as to its meaning. Whatever its exact definition, sustainable development considers how local actions impact on other people in communities and countries across the globe. It makes links between society, economy and environment and considers the needs and rights of both present and future generations. **Enough for All Forever** is how sustainable development is encapsulated in Australia.

Sustainability and the global dimension

Sustainable development is a proactive concept and explores what actions individuals and organisations can take in response to local and global issues. By learning about sustainable development children can consider the best ways to tackle interrelated global social justice challenges such as inequality, poverty and climate change.

A sustainable curriculum aims to create a better world from the place we are in and enables pupils to contribute to the changes which are so urgently needed. Students will have to adapt to new situations never before seen. They will have to deal with the repercussions of previous generations uncritical actions. A sustainable curriculum should develop a sustainable school which should aim to become a beacon of learning and hope.

Sustainable development provides a 'bigger picture' in which to join-up work on a range of policies and initiatives, such as healthy schools, school travel planning and learning outside the classroom. The Sustainable Schools National Framework, which has been influencing schools' approach to this issue for many years, called on schools to embrace a caring ethos, not just for each other in the school community, but also across cultures, distances and generations. The underlying principles, and the framework itself, continue to provide a helpful focus for schools.

The sustainable schools framework has three interlocking parts

1. A commitment to care (for yourself, each other and the environment)
2. An integrated approach (across the campus, curriculum and community)
3. Eight doorways to sustainability

Schools are also called on to care for the environment both locally and globally by considering their energy usage, consumption and waste and how such factors impact on the local and global community.

For school leaders developing sustainable schools **The journey of sustainable schools: developing and embedding sustainability** Report summarises the findings from Forum for the Future and the Institute of Education's 2009 -10 research for the National College into how school leaders are developing and embedding sustainability within their schools and communities. It includes examples of the skills, tools and activities school leaders are using to do this.

Outcomes for pupils

- understand how people, the environment and the economy are inextricably linked at all levels from local to global.
- recognise the importance of taking individual and collective responsibility and action to make the world a sustainable place
- understand basic needs and human rights and how our actions impact on the needs and rights of people around the world, as well as future generations.
- understand, respect and value both human and ecological diversity. understanding that resources are finite and the implications of this for people's lifestyles and for commerce and industry.
- acknowledge that global equity and justice are inextricably linked to sustainability and that basic needs must be met universally to ensure a good quality of life.
- acknowledge that there are a range of possible approaches to making the world a more sustainable place and that situations are constantly changing, indicating a need for flexibility and lifelong learning
- develop a critical evaluation of images of, and information about, issues related to sustainable development and an appreciation of the effect these have on people's attitudes and values
- understand how conflicts are a barrier to sustainable development and the need for peaceful resolutions to conflict.

Linking sustainability to the global context, using the sustainable schools* doorways as a basis

Doorway	Sustainable Schools aspiring, by 2020, to be...	Examples of specific global dimension
Food and drink	model suppliers of healthy, local and sustainable food and drink, showing strong commitments to the environment, social responsibility and animal welfare	Rights: right to food as a basic human need throughout the world Poverty & climate change: affects of these on food and drink consumption & production throughout the world Population: feeding a growing world population Comparisons around the world: diets and farming methods Other key issues: food miles; fair trade; biofuels
Energy and water	models of energy efficiency, renewable energy and water conservation	Rights: right to (clean) water as a basic human need, e.g. for health care, sanitation, nutrition Poverty & climate change: causes and affects around the world; climate refugees and international adaptation funds Comparisons around the world: patterns of energy & water use; alternative methods of production & conservation Other key issues: peak oil; Kyoto Treaty; water shortage as source of global conflicts
Travel and traffic	models of sustainable travel, where vehicles are used only when absolutely necessary	Rights: right to health (free from pollution & role of physical activity & safety) Climate change: impact of CO2 emissions, transport pollution Comparisons around the world: carbon footprints, travel methods, alternative Other key issues: peak oil; food miles; ethical tourism
Purchasing and waste	models of waste minimisation and sustainable procurement	Rights: workers' rights around the world; child labour; 'sweat shops' Interdependence: country of origin for personal and school purchases; country of destination for waste products Poverty & climate change: landfill and 'dumping' of waste in poorer parts of the world Comparisons around the world: definitions of 'rubbish'; recycling and waste levels Other key issues: food miles; wood & the Amazon rainforest; virtual energy & water
Buildings and grounds	manage and, where possible, design their buildings in ways that visibly demonstrate sustainable development to everyone who uses the school	Rights: right to shelter; workers' rights in global building industry Poverty & climate change: building regulations (or lack of) and a country's ability to withstand affects of severe weather, earthquakes etc Comparisons around the world: buildings and their levels of sustainability; food growing
Inclusion, participation & local well-being	models of social inclusion and corporate citizenship, enabling all pupils to participate fully in school life	Rights: right to nationality, language, religion; right to safety; right to express an opinion Interdependence: affects of actions on local communities around the world Other key issues: diversity, refuge

* Global Dimension is the eighth Doorway and it is being explored in more detail throughout this leaflet

London Sustainable Schools Forum

LSSF aims for every London school to be a sustainable school by 2020; that is a school which integrates all aspects of its curriculum with the community, its resources and the environment.

For the London Sustainable Schools curriculum group, the vision is of a sustainable curriculum, where teachers are confident enough in their own subject to regularly collaborate with other subjects and the wider community. Together they can help construct alternative futures. As a result students are enabled to make the connections between their subjects to develop a more sustainable school. Current projects include carbon reduction, health and wellbeing, waste reduction, school grounds, and a school food culture project



Case Studies

Pupils at St Martin at Shouldham, Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School have been connecting pupils' local actions on the environment to wider world issues by investigating how children in countries such as India are adapting to climate change.

Pupils at an infant school in Edmonton, North London, brought in tins and packets of everyday food. Using the labels from the food they found out where the food had come from, put the labels around a world map and then drew lines between the places and the labels. They found out what these places were like and how they would travel to them. In doing this, the children learnt that we depend on other countries for much of our food, and began to develop an awareness of the wider world.

Through comparing household waste in different countries, as part of a multi-country project, pupils from Llandrygarn Primary School learned with and from children from Denmark and Nicaragua; through this experience they realised that children and adults in less economically developed countries share many of the same concerns as they and their communities do, whilst pupils in Nicaragua learnt that communities in more economically developed countries also had problems and concerns and were searching for sustainable solutions. The project contributed to pupils' work in science, geography and language.

Who defines Sustainable Development?

A 1987 report entitled *Our Common Future* by the Brundtland Commission established the most often-quoted definition of sustainable development as "**development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.**" It also states that: "**Sustainable global development requires that those who are more affluent adopt life-styles within the planet's ecological means.**"

The concept has become an important part of economic and social, as well as environmental, decision making. Some argue the term has been over used and even hijacked by those seeking to further their political or economic power or influence.

Children and young people have to feel optimistic about their futures if they are to contribute to sustainable development throughout their adult lives. The best way of creating that optimism is to learn about sustainable development. It must therefore be a vital and core part of the curriculum.

Christine Blower, General Secretary of the National Union of Teachers

How can the needs of current and future generations be met in a world where the aspirations of many people far exceed their needs and the life chances of the many more are acutely limited by poverty and environmental decline?

UNESCO 1997, Educating for a Sustainable Future

Underlying all our images of a sustainable future is the key principle that sustainability is about 'thinking about forever... Building the capacity to think in terms of 'forever' is a key task of education.

UNESCO

We cannot just add sustainable development to our current list of things to do but must learn to integrate the concepts into everything that we do.

Dorset Education for Sustainability Network

I can see how [sustainability is] going to help me in my life, my community and my environment. It makes links between what's in my mind and the skills I need.

Chris, Year 9

The poorest people in Africa and Asia are sending a mayday message to the rest of the world. Please help us fight climate change."

ActionAid coordinator, Uganda 2007

Our habits of production and consumption are taking us beyond critical thresholds in the use of the earth's resources. The effects of this – air pollution, climate change, loss of biodiversity, deforestation, soil erosion and water scarcity – are increasingly visible everywhere.

Cook, 2004

The Government is fully committed to sustainable development and the importance of preparing young people for the future. Our approach to reform is based on the belief that schools perform better when they take responsibility for their own improvement.

UK Government, Department of Education, December 2010