

## Linking global learning and local actions at Key Stage 3 citizenship

### What was the aim?

In this activity pupils at a Portsmouth school were given the opportunity to find out about local actions in response to an issue of global concern by investigating local authority plans for more sustainable development, including those related to the 2012 Local Agenda 21 update 'The Future We Want' [http://www.progressive.org/rio\\_20\\_kicks\\_off.html](http://www.progressive.org/rio_20_kicks_off.html) The focus involved considering how local actions might relate to the wider world with an aim to translate the concept of sustainability from one that is abstract to something more realistic and actionable in a political and physical way. This work also provides an opportunity to link to other curriculum subjects including Geography and Science.

### What is the link from citizenship to global learning?

- Learning about becoming an informed and active citizen.
- Giving opportunities for individuals to bring about change locally, nationally and globally.
- Looking at the wider issues of interdependence and responsibility, including sustainable development and local responses to this, including Local Agenda 21.
- Researching a topical, political, moral, social or cultural issue or problem or event by analysing information from a variety of sources.
- Presenting, justifying and defending orally or in writing a personal opinion about such issues.
- Taking part in group and class discussions and in debates with community members including expert witnesses.
- Being able to think critically about an authentic issue and apply global knowledge in a local context.

### How does the work set about achieving this?

The work involves four key elements:

1. What are the local and global issues that affect our community?
2. How can our community become more sustainable and why is this important?
3. What do we know about local responses to sustainable development?
4. What realistic actions do we want to take to help our community meet global sustainability responsibilities?

The pupils conducted an enquiry to find out about the key global challenges that link their community to other places, what the local priorities are, how these are arrived at and how the community, especially young people, are consulted by the local authority. They created mindmaps of what they already knew about their local plans for sustainability, drawing on prior knowledge. They then investigated the relationship between local plans and Agenda 21, inviting a member of Portsmouth City Council, with responsibility for aspects of Agenda 21, to discuss it with them.

Having shared their findings across the class, the pupils decided a focus for further enquiry. In one instance food was chosen as an exemplar. They considered issues of: local foods and what foods are produced elsewhere; food miles; local transportation; points of sale of local food, etc. Plotting information on maps and charts they built up a comprehensive picture of the issue and highlighted challenges and problems that policy could address, including location of farmers' markets, recycling centres, food composting opportunities, etc. Pupils then started to devise campaigns to draw attention to their findings, considering how to share their concerns and with whom, including those in local trading, the local authority and consumers. They also decided actions that the school and community could take and monitoring policies to check progress over time.

### **How well did the activity work?**

Student learning enabled them to gain insight into the complex choices that local authorities take in trying to meet global challenges and how decisions are planned for the future of the community. Pupils learned about how they could contribute to local decisions and consider taking action to do this. They learned how to investigate authentic local issues that matter to them and that affect their lives and the lives of those around them as well as globally, they learned how to gather useful information and make use of it to influence decision makers. The work also attracted the attention of the school leadership who saw the work as a genuine opportunity to strengthen global learning across the community.

### **What happened next?**

Initially the citizenship teachers thought the focus of the work could be driven by the local authority plan or by selecting a topic to explore, for example transport energy use and climate change, use of water, public health or trading policy. Pupils however began to relate their early findings to their own concerns and sought to encourage the local authority to respond to student views, not their own policy. Success was measured by the school looking at establishing a strategic relationship with the local authority to monitor specific aspects of student investigations and continue a dialogue between the school and the local authority and also bringing in ward councilors, school governors and parents into discussions. The senior leadership team built the theme into the student voice development plan and appointed a staff member to continue to work with the student body on the ideas the citizenship work had initiated.

### **More information and links**

Information on Agenda 21 and its developments can be found here <http://www.icleiusa.org/about-iclei/faqs/faq-iclei-the-united-nations-and-agenda-21#what-is-agenda-21>

Hampshire County Council developed a comprehensive strategy for sustainable communities through to 2018 [http://www3.hants.gov.uk/73496\\_sustain\\_communities\\_2.pdf](http://www3.hants.gov.uk/73496_sustain_communities_2.pdf)