

The World in Clanfield

What effect does embedding the global dimension have on the knowledge and attitudes of staff and pupils in a rural primary school?

Clanfield CE Primary School in Oxfordshire has embarked on a whole school, long-term project to embed the global dimension into every aspect of school life.

What did they want to achieve?

In a rural, village school where 80% of pupils had not visited their own capital city and few had met anyone from a different ethnic group or culture, the Headteacher, Jane Lloyd, decided that 'developing a deeper understanding of our role as global citizens' was a priority. In the long term she wanted the school to become a regional centre for the development and dissemination of good practice in the global dimension.

How did they set about doing this?

The school accepted an invitation from Reading International Solidarity Centre (RISC) to work towards becoming a 'Global School' with support and training provided free. Including as a two year priority in the School Development Plan the aim of 'Embedding a global connection in everything we do', ensured that governors were involved from the start. A large display in the entrance hall, 'The world in Clanfield', launched the work.

RISC carried out a baseline audit with children in Years 2, 4 and 6. These children took part in a carousel of activities designed to gather evidence of their knowledge about and attitudes to a range of global issues. For example, a diamond ranking activity explored the best way to protect the environment, a card sorting activity demonstrated knowledge and attitudes about diversity, and an activity matching photos and jobs explored attitudes to race and gender. As well as these results, the children's comments were recorded to provide qualitative data. The audit revealed that most of the children had very stereotypical views of Africa, Asia, South America and the Caribbean and the extent and depth of their insularity in general was very evident.

The staff decided to prioritise the global dimension in all future planning, and they identified many opportunities for this. Every activity, display and event with a global dimension was annotated and recorded. After some introductory Global Citizenship training, with opportunities for the whole staff to explore their own preconceptions and values, RISC provided further staff training in global Maths, Design & Technology, Science, Art, Literacy, Oracy and Music, and ongoing support with curriculum planning.

A library audit by the RISC team revealed that only seven books in the entire collection represented a balanced view of countries in Africa, Asia, South America and the Caribbean. Books which depicted very negative images have been discarded and money is being spent on improving the book stock.

How well did they achieve their aims?

Whole staff training including non teaching staff has had a major impact, enabling staff to explore their own attitudes, come up with ideas and activities, and see the interconnections between existing work on sustainability, healthy schools and fair trade.

The results of the mid-project audits showed that although some negative stereotypes were still evident, children's knowledge and understanding had increased – for instance their ideas about what they would see if they visited an African country reflected more balance. Ideas about gender stereotyping continued to be firmly held. The children were most knowledgeable about issues of sustainability and about education and why some children do not go to school. Both are linked closely with their curriculum work and life experience.

The school's increasing awareness of the global dimension has been shared with the local community through their report at the parish council's AGM and regular reports in the village magazine. The publicity has led to interest from other schools in the local partnership: three schools have attended twilight in-service training sessions and have shared global dimension activities and resources. Clanfield has received an equality award from the local authority in recognition of their work.

What do they plan to do next?

The mid-project audit showed staff that the journey has only begun and the school must continue to prioritise the global dimension. A final audit, four years after the start of the project, will give another measure of progress. *'I believe that in September 2005 we began a learning journey that will be lifelong'*. (Jane Lloyd, Headteacher)

Making a link with a school overseas was one of the initial objectives and a link was set up with a school in India. However, after one exchange of letters, the link proved too difficult to sustain. This was disappointing, but a link is now being developed with a large, culturally diverse school in Oxford, which is also part of the Global Schools project.



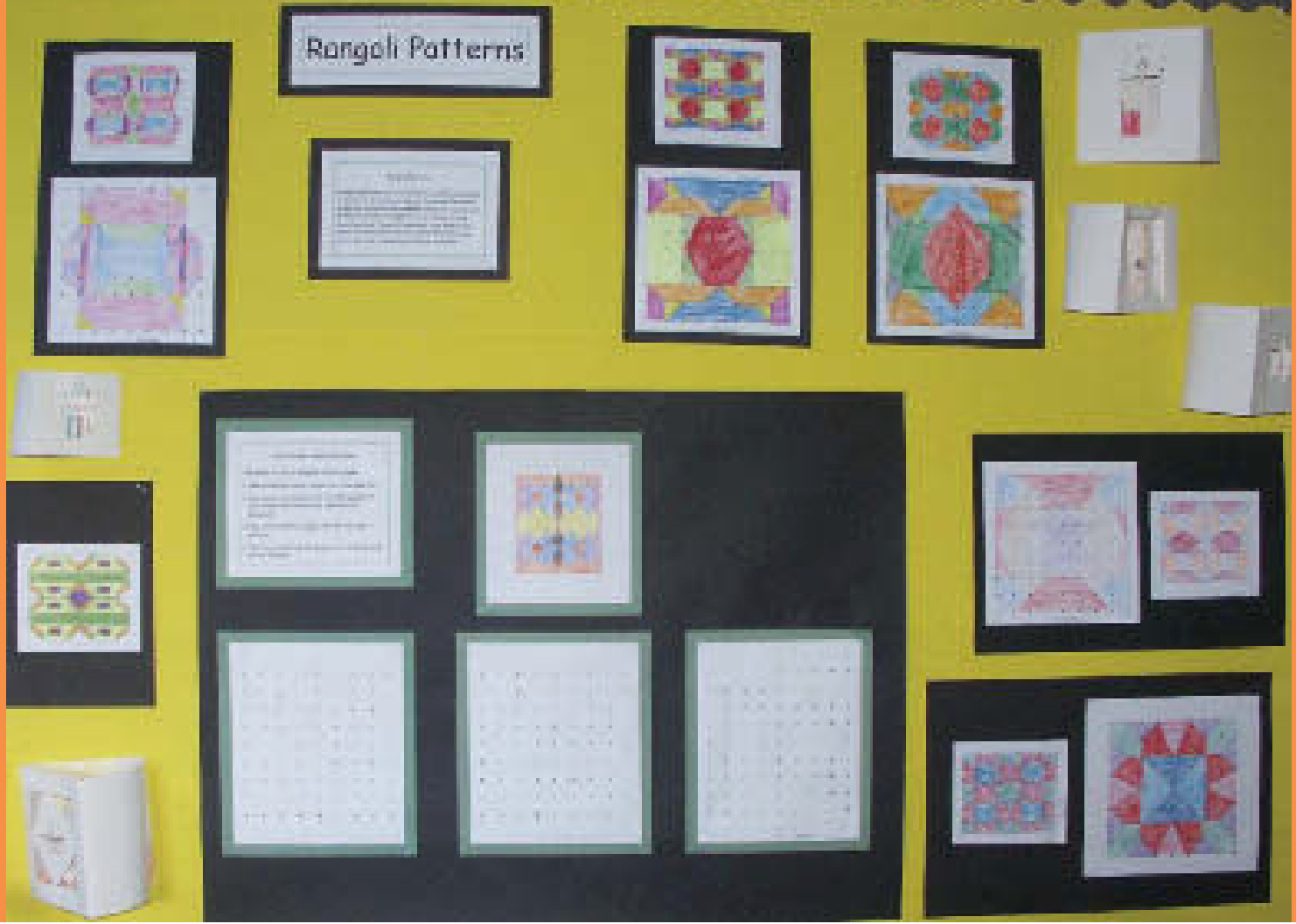
“Why have you linked with a community that is 5,000 miles away, not with a Muslim community in Britain?”

UKOWLA – UK One World Linking Association



Reflections:

- Lifelong learning around the global dimension, including challenging attitudes is essential. Action-research by teachers can be an important part of this.
- The external support of a critical friend, such as RISC, can enhance the action-research process by evaluating progress and suggesting ways forward.
- Linking with a school in another country can be very challenging and if this is something a school wants to do, it is often a good idea to start by linking with a school in the same country.



“ In my school SEF [Ofsted self evaluation form], I stated our aim as a church school was: “to promote an understanding of being part of something bigger”. Ironically I had not understood that far from being a solely religious or spiritual aim it is also literal. We are all part of a big, wide, diverse and wonderful world! The choices we make on a daily basis matter both locally and globally! ”

Jane Lloyd, Headteacher

More information:

- Find out more about RISC’s work with Global Schools at www.risc.org.uk/education.
- Also articles on www.local4global.org.uk.

www.risc.org.uk

