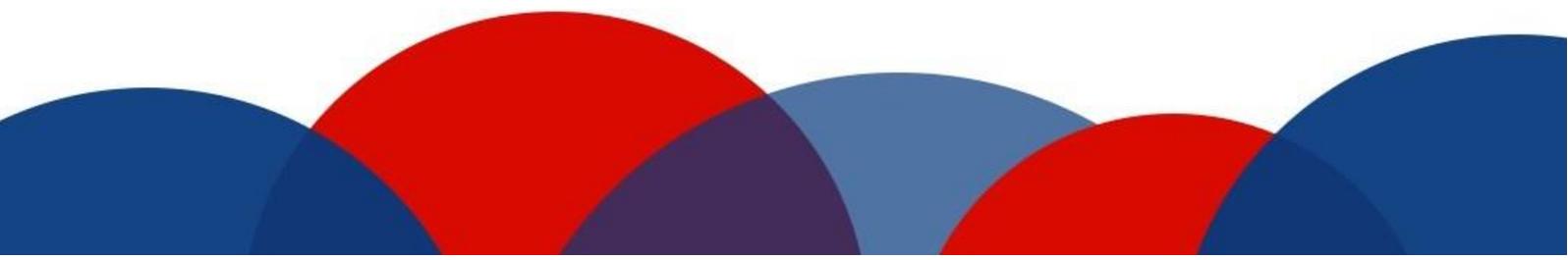


# **A study exploring the sustainability of global learning in schools**

**Colette Cotton**

**2018**

**Global Learning Programme  
Innovation Fund Research Series  
Paper 7**



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<sup>1</sup> Email Colette at: [colette.uk@gmail.com](mailto:colette.uk@gmail.com)

## Abbreviations

<b>CPD</b>	Continuing Professional Development
<b>DE</b>	Development Education, also referred to as Global Education
<b>DFID</b>	Department for International Development
<b>EAL</b>	English as an additional language (non-native speakers)
<b>GD</b>	Global dimension
<b>GL</b>	Global learning
<b>GLP</b>	Global Learning Programme
<b>HLTA</b>	Higher Level Teaching Assistant
<b>ICT</b>	Information and Communication Technology
<b>KS2</b>	Key Stage 2
<b>KS3</b>	Key Stage 3
<b>MDG</b>	Millennium Development Goal
<b>MFL</b>	Modern Foreign Languages
<b>NGO</b>	Non-government organisation
<b>SATs</b>	Standard Attainment Tests
<b>SLT</b>	Senior Leadership Team
<b>SMT</b>	Senior Management Team
<b>SMSC</b>	Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations' Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

## **Acknowledgements**

This research would not have been possible without the time and willingness of teaching colleagues across England, who were prepared to answer the questionnaires and return them by email.

I would like to thank the British Council for enabling me to hold a workshop for their Ambassadors on the subject of this research study, which gave an unexpected depth to the study, and the individuals who were prepared to trial the one-to-one interviews after the workshop.

I would like to thank the teachers at the GLP Expert Centre where I was able to lead the discussion on this research study.

A special thank you to Dr Frances Hunt at the UCL Institute of Education, who has been very supportive throughout the whole of this study.

**Abstract**

The aim of this research was to assess how we can ensure that global learning is sustainable in schools in England. It was undertaken with teachers involved in the Global Learning Programme (GLP) to provide an insight into their views about the positive aspects in schools that ensure that this is possible. It also looks at what these teachers perceive to be some of the problems that make it difficult for schools to succeed in successfully implementing and sustaining global learning, and gives some advice to schools who want to engage with global learning.

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# 1 Introduction

The Global Learning Programme (GLP) in England<sup>2</sup> was a five-year, UK government-funded programme aimed at supporting the teaching and learning of global learning in schools at KS2 and KS3<sup>3</sup>. This small scale research is part of the GLP's significant research and evaluation strand, which aims to build a body of knowledge on global learning in schools.

This paper aims to explore the question:

- How can we ensure that global learning is sustainable in schools?

I was a GLP Expert Centre<sup>4</sup> co-ordinator and led the training for nineteen registered schools from our area of South East England. During the sixteen months of this engagement, it became clear that several schools were finding it difficult to release teachers after school for eight twilight sessions<sup>5</sup>. The larger schools had allocated one or two globally interested teachers to attend the training, but in smaller schools this was usually only one person and in four cases it was the head teacher. Unfortunately many of these had to cancel attendance at the last minute due to unforeseen circumstances in their school. We managed an average attendance of eleven teachers over the eight sessions, but that left several who did not attend. I wanted to know how sustainable would global learning be in those schools. Also, the twilight training took place just over an academic year, and during that time four teachers attending had changed schools and found that their new school was not interested in global learning. One further school had been closed.

These issues raised questions about how and if schools could sustain successful global learning and led to this short research study. I chose this focus for a number of reasons:

- Issues at my own GLP Expert Centre network of non-attendance at twilight sessions by some of the registered schools.
- I wondered how schools could sustain successful global learning if those who were interested couldn't attend training sessions for continued professional development (CPD).
- Concerns as to what happens to global learning when a 'key person' leaves a school or there is a change of leadership.
- I wondered how global learning could be successfully embedded within schools.
- Also, to date, there has been limited academic focus on the topic of sustainability of global learning.

In this research I look at the following three questions:

1. What initiatives and activities can enhance the sustainability of global learning in schools?
2. What factors can make global learning vulnerable in schools?
3. How might schools prepare themselves to enhance the sustainability of global learning?

In this paper I provide some context to global learning in schools. In Section 2 Methodology, I explain the four methods that were used in the study to explore the research questions and some of the problems encountered. Section 3 (Findings) covers the three main research questions for this small-scale study and shows the quantitative and qualitative results by using

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<sup>2</sup> See: [www.glp-e.org.uk](http://www.glp-e.org.uk) for further information.

<sup>3</sup> Pupils aged 7 to 14.

<sup>4</sup> GLP Expert Centres are schools with more experience and expertise in global learning, who lead networks of other Partner Schools.

<sup>5</sup> Each Expert Centre network was expected to lead the equivalent of eight twilight training sessions with their network of schools.

figures, tables and illustrations for visual explanation and interpretation. Section 4 (Conclusions and recommendations) provides some answers to the focus of this study.

## 1.1 Global learning context

During the many years I have been involved with global/international learning, there have been considerable changes in attitudes to this area of the curriculum. Schools now have more opportunities to become involved with this important aspect of learning, supported by the Department for International Development (DFID) and other providers. Before the 1988 Education Reform Act, school linking was often of a charitable nature, working with schools in a South-North School Link, or done for MFL links with schools in France, Germany and Spain to support these languages being taught in schools.

As long ago as 1950, there were attempts at a more structured framework for schools with the following guidelines from UNESCO (1950: 19):

*In primary and secondary schools, every effort should be made, both in teaching and in framing programmes of study, to avoid inculcating by word or implication the belief that lands, peoples and customs other than one's own are necessarily inferior, or are otherwise unworthy of understanding and sympathy.*

Since 1988, there have been more constraints and requirements on schools to ensure that school linking has become less of a charitable affair and more equitable, with schools working together pedagogically. The key concepts of poverty, peace and conflict, diversity, interdependence, sustainability and adaptability, democracy and human rights are part of this global work.

In 2000, the Millennium Development Goals were launched by the UN (UN, 2000):

*The eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) – which range from halving extreme poverty rates to halting the spread of HIV/AIDS and providing universal primary education, all by the target date of 2015 – form a blueprint agreed to by all the world's countries and all the world's leading development institutions.*

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon (UN, 2008) wrote:

*Eradicating extreme poverty continues to be one of the main challenges of our time, and is a major concern of the international community. Ending this scourge will require the combined efforts of all, governments, civil society organizations and the private sector, in the context of a stronger and more effective global partnership for development. The Millennium Development Goals set time-bound targets, by which progress in reducing income poverty, hunger, disease, lack of adequate shelter and exclusion – while promoting gender equality, health, education and environmental sustainability – can be measured. They also embody basic human rights – the rights of each person on the planet to health, education, shelter and security. The Goals are ambitious but feasible and, together with the comprehensive United Nations development agenda, set the course for the world's efforts to alleviate extreme poverty by 2015.*

With the introduction of the MDGs, international programmes started to expand in UK schools, with the British Council beginning their International School Award<sup>6</sup> in 1999 to recognise schools that were leading the way in instilling and developing a global dimension into the learning experience of all children and young people.

The Fairtrade Award<sup>7</sup> for schools also started around this time and has become very successful over the last twenty years, encouraging students' critical thinking and joining a

<sup>6</sup> <https://schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org/about-programmes/international-school-award>

<sup>7</sup> <https://schools.fairtrade.org.uk/fairtrade-schools-awards/>

worldwide movement, where young people learn that, whatever their age, they have the power to make a difference in the world. The award:

*Offers a great opportunity to look at global issues such as where our food comes from and how we are connected to people around the world. Students can learn a range of skills, from teamwork and co-operation to persuasive writing to running a stall or tuck shop. The teaching about Fairtrade fits different curriculum areas, especially Geography, Citizenship and PSHE (Fairtrade, 2018).*

E-Twinning<sup>8</sup> launched in 2005, promotes school collaboration across Europe through the use of ICT and enables schools to communicate, collaborate and develop projects for free. Since its launch, over 9,000 projects have taken place in UK schools benefitting thousands of pupils of all ages and abilities. By 2017, there had been over half a million registrations (including 25,000 teachers from the UK), making it the largest teachers' network in the world.

The GLP started in 2013 with the aim of creating a national network of like-minded schools, committed to equipping their pupils to make a positive contribution to a globalised world by helping their teachers to deliver effective teaching and learning about development and global issues at Key Stages 2 and 3.

In 2015, two years after the start of GLP, the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also known as the Global Goals, were launched. These 17 Goals build on the successes of the Millennium Development Goals, and include a further nine new areas, including climate change, economic inequality, sustainable consumption, peace and justice. These goals are all interconnected, as our partner school in India discovered when deciding which of them related to a project on zero waste. The key to success on one goal will involve tackling issues more commonly associated with another.

Several of the schools in this research use the SDGs as part of their global learning work, either when working with partner schools, or in other areas of the curriculum.

UNDP Administrator Achim Steiner wrote in 2016:

*They provide clear guidelines and targets for all countries to adopt in accordance with their own priorities and the environmental challenges of the world at large. The SDGs are an inclusive agenda. They tackle the root causes of poverty and unite us together to make a positive change for both people and planet. Poverty eradication is at the heart of the 2030 Agenda, and so is the commitment to leave no-one behind (UNDP, 2016).*

The opportunity for teachers to learn and implement in-depth core skills as an important element of global work in their classrooms and partner schools was introduced by the British Council in 2015. It was noted, (see Section 3), that several of the participants in this study have used one or more of these skills, which has helped to support the embedding of global work in their schools.

The skills are:

- critical thinking and problem solving
- creativity and imagination
- digital literacy
- student leadership and personal development
- citizenship
- communication and collaboration.

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<sup>8</sup> <https://www.etwinning.net>

## 2 Methodology

### 2.1 Introduction

This research is a small-scale quantitative and qualitative study into teachers and school leaders' perceptions relating to how global learning can be sustainable in schools.

### 2.2 Data collection methods

Initially I thought that data needed for this research could be accessed via email, but as this proved difficult, it was necessary to think of other methods to obtain the required information. Opportunities arose during the research study and four methods were used to collect data (see Table 1):

1. Online questionnaire surveys
2. Data collection via group work at British Council (BC) conference workshop
3. Data collection via group work at Expert Centre twilight training session
4. Face-to-face interview

**Table 1: Summary of data collection methods**

Source of data	Number of respondents	Info on respondents	Comment
Face-to-face interview	2	Both participants in BC conference workshop and also part of GLP	Data not used, but informs discussion (see: 2.2.2).
Online surveys/questionnaires	30	Participants from workshops and contacts from the GLP	
Group activity outputs from workshop proceedings	38	Participants in BC conference workshop; Participants in EC training	

Details of these results can be found in **Section 3: Findings**.

In order to give a balanced view of perceptions, schools from different regions of England were selected, rather than focusing on one specific geographical area. The main focus was on primary schools (KS2) that had registered for the Global Learning Programme. In order to give a rich balance of breadth for a worthwhile result to this small scale study, it was anticipated that responses from 20–40 schools would be needed.

#### 2.2.1 Initial emails

Schools were first contacted by email in June 2016 after SATs and before the autumn term when teachers might be moving to other schools. Due to unforeseen problems with responses to the initial email, the sampling continued until September 2017.

GLP Expert Centre schools, which were highlighted as being particularly active and supportive by GLP Local Advisors, were initially selected as a point of contact. A brief email outlining the research study was then sent to 'named' GLP co-ordinators in these Expert Centre schools, asking if they would participate.

There was a very poor response from this initial approach by e-mail, for a variety of reasons, but largely due to the fact that the original GLP co-ordinator was no longer responsible for global learning or due to a change of school staffing. Follow-up phone calls were made to some of these schools but there was no success and staff were unavailable to take calls. As a result there was no data from the initial emails that were sent out.

### 2.2.2 British Council conference workshop

In February 2017, I was approached by the British Council to lead a workshop at their Ambassadors' conference in Manchester. This was given the title: 'As Ambassadors how can we ensure that Global Learning is sustainable in schools?', so it fitted in extremely well with this research.

It was decided that as many of the delegates attending the conference were also involved with the Global Learning Programme in their schools, this workshop and the questionnaire (Appendix 1) would be a useful way to gather up-to-date information for this study.

There were 28 delegates participating in the workshop, who were asked to consider the following three questions:

1. What factors support sustainability in schools?
2. What factors make schools vulnerable and unable to maintain global learning?
3. Have you any examples of how schools have supported sustainability in global learning?

Working in four groups they were asked to discuss the first question 'What factors support sustainability in schools?' and then design a global learning school that would support this, specifically looking at the skills, knowledge, facilities, values and attitudes that would be needed. On completion, each group then shared their global learning school idea, with the rest of the group, giving reasons for their designs. Please see these results in Section 3, illustrations 1 to 4.

Each group was then asked to discuss question 2 'What factors make schools vulnerable and unable to maintain global learning?' They were asked to identify and record on a sticky note just one thing each, which they thought contributed to this. Next these ideas were ordered with the most significant at the top, with one person giving the feedback for their decisions to the rest of delegates. These results can be seen in Section 3, illustrations 5 to 8.

Leading on from this the delegates identified five questions schools can ask to help support sustainability of global learning and identify areas of focus. These were:

- What are the school's priorities
- Is there someone in charge of global learning at the school
- Is the SLT/SMT involved
- Could CPD be put in place for staff?
- What skills/knowledge does the school need?

At the end of the workshop delegates were asked if they could complete the draft questionnaire (Appendix 1) for the research project during the next two days, and two of the GLP participants volunteered for a one-to-one, recorded interview later that evening.

The one-to-one interviews proved quite difficult for both participants, who found it hard to keep to one specific point and wanted to keep adding further information to each question. In the end they decided to complete the written questionnaire as this would then give them more time to answer each question without repeating themselves. As a result no data was recorded from these two interviews.

Following the conference, all the delegates who had attended the workshop and who had been part of the GLP agreed to complete the online questionnaire (Appendix 2).

### 2.2.3 Expert Centre twilight training session

Early in May I was asked to lead a GLP twilight training session at a relatively new Expert Centre in the South East of England. There were 10 people at this session, comprising two head teachers, six teachers and two teaching assistants. All agreed to share their views on the same questions that had been given at the British Council's conference. They were very

concerned about all the obstacles that they perceived lay in front of them before global learning could be safely established in their schools.

1. What factors support sustainability in schools?
2. What factors make schools vulnerable and unable to maintain global learning?
3. Have you any examples of how schools have supported sustainability in global learning?

The data from all of these can be found in Section 3.

#### **2.2.4 Online questionnaire**

As a result of the British Council's conference and the GLP twilight session, I was given the details of other active GLP teachers to contact, and by the end of July I had managed to receive 30 completed questionnaires on which to base the findings for this research along with these two group sessions.

### **2.3 Ethical considerations**

All data collected in this research was anonymous and respondents signed the following statement:

*I agree to take part in this research project. I understand the research ethics information involved. I understand that my participation is voluntary and I can stop taking part at any time. Confidentiality and anonymity will be guaranteed for teachers, pupils and schools. No sensitive data will be collected and participants will not be identifiable outside the school. Any data used will ensure teacher/pupil contributions and school names are anonymised and are confidential.*

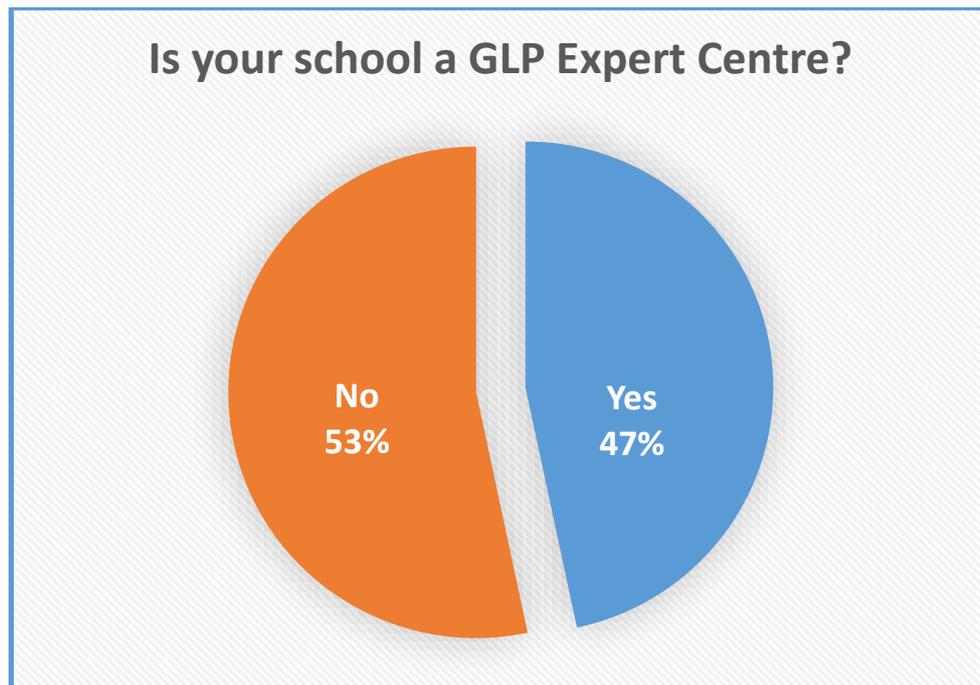
Participants were asked to provide the geographical district of their school and their position, in order to achieve a balanced view across England.

### **2.4 Data analysis**

The time scale for this study was extended to 18 months. It included both qualitative and quantitative data. The data from the two group workshops was recorded as illustrations 1 to 12, to give a more visual aspect, and table 4, whereas the data from the 30 online questionnaires was recorded in figures 1 to 5 and tables 1 to 3, which show mainly quantitative results. I analysed the data to respond to the research questions.

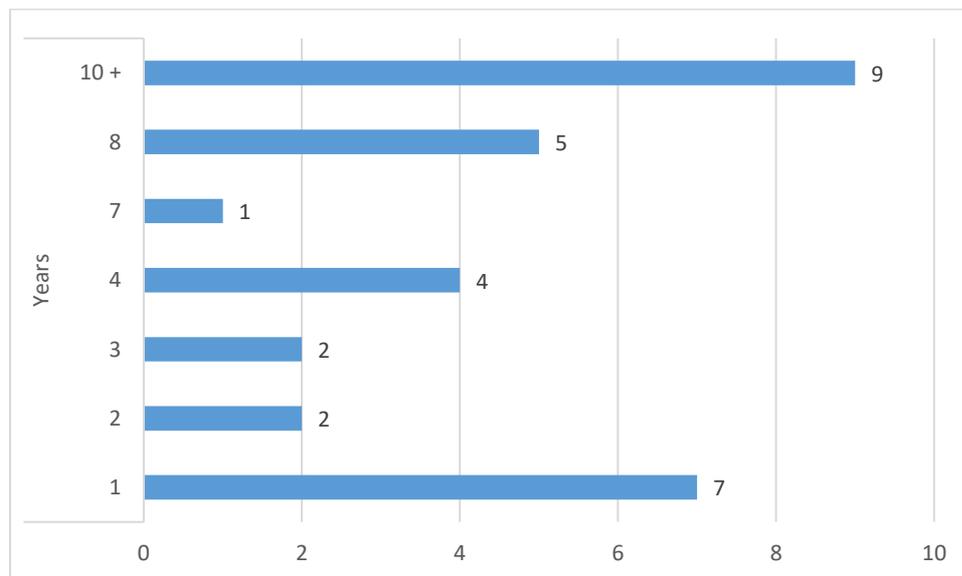
### **2.5 About the research participants**

All participants were from schools registered on the GLP. Figure 1 shows the number involved in the online questionnaires who were from a GLP Expert Centre. There is very little difference between those responding, with 47% from a GLP Expert Centre and 53% not from an Expert Centre. This means that many of the participants had expertise and experience in global learning and had been working in the area for some time.

**Figure 1: Expert Centre status of questionnaire respondents**

(Source: questionnaire q. 2).

Next, a question asked respondents how long their school had been working on global learning. (See Figure 2). 50% of the responding schools had been working on global learning for more than seven years, showing that it is already embedded to some extent. The 27% of schools who have been engaged with global learning for two to four years are developing this element, with 23% of schools at the early stage.

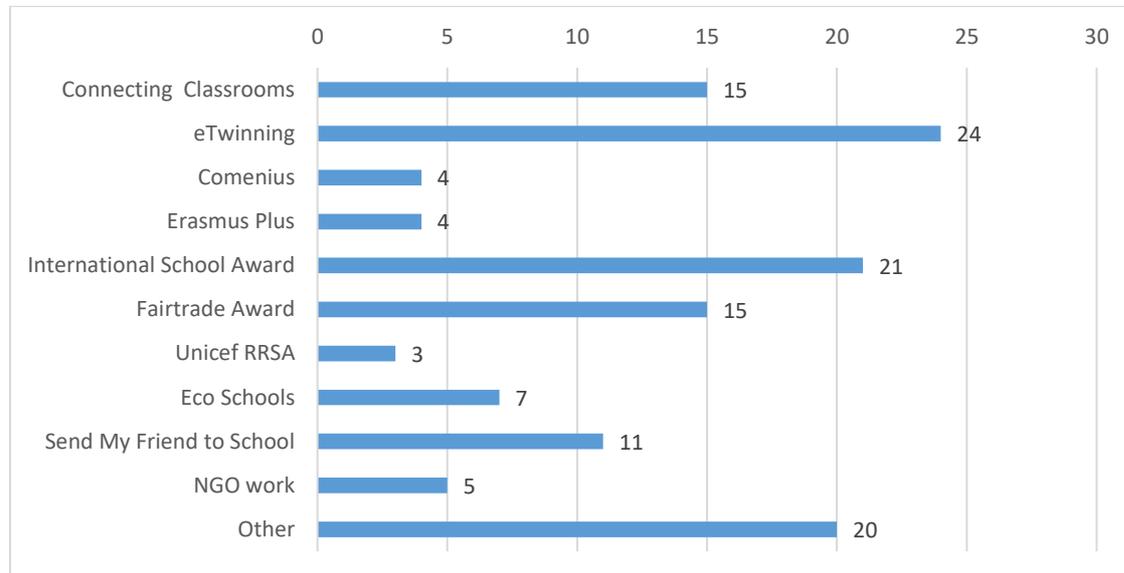
**Figure 2: How long has your school been working on global learning? (N=30)**

(Source: questionnaire q. 3)

Participants were asked to highlight the selected global learning programmes they are involved in. A high percentage of schools are involved in one of the many British Council global projects, with 80% taking part in the e-Twinning programme. 70% had participated in the British Council's International School Award, while 50% were part of Connecting Classrooms.

Schools were also using other available NGO projects, with 50% working with Fairtrade and achieving one of their awards. Other projects included UNICEF's Right Respecting Schools work and Eco Schools. 37% of schools in this study take part in the annual 'Send My Friend to School' campaign. See Figure 3 below:

**Figure 3: Projects and programmes that support global learning in participating schools (N=30)**



(Source: questionnaire q. 5)

Over 65% of the schools involved in this research had used other programmes, from those listed, for their global learning, with four schools using Modern Foreign Languages to engage and enhance their pupils' work to communicate more easily with partner schools.

## 3 Findings

This section will look at the quantitative and qualitative responses from the 30 questionnaires that were completed by GLP practitioners across England. It will look at the findings and discussions from 28 delegates at the British Council workshop on the sustainability of global learning in schools. It will look at the findings from a GLP twilight training session for 10 educators and their concerns for sustainable global learning in schools.

Due to the nature of these two workshops, the British Council workshop and the GLP twilight session, talking and discussing as groups provided mainly qualitative data.

### 3.1 What initiatives and activities can enhance the sustainability of global learning in schools?

#### 3.1.1 Online questionnaire responses

##### What are the key factors that support global learning in schools?

In terms of responding to this, questions 4 and 8 (in the questionnaire) were asking for similar information, so were amalgamated for these results.

The findings in figure 3 show that over 50% of practitioners highlighted the importance of the head teacher, Senior Management Team (SMT), (global learning) international co-ordinator and staff as important factors for the success of global learning in schools. 50% of responses also highlighted the importance of global learning becoming embedded into the curriculum along with CPD for staff.

Qualitative responses focused on curriculum and teaching:

*It is important that projects can be integrated into the current syllabus and, although time consuming, information on work being done in class needs collecting from individual staff on a regular basis (teacher).*

*We devised our own curriculum in 2015/2016 which places global learning at heart of our children's learning (head teacher).*

*It is embedded into the curriculum and is not a badge or an add on*

*A key factor that supports global learning at our school is that it is embedded across the curriculum, it is essential for both teachers and pupils, it leads to a better understanding of the world's cultures and religions. Educators should have links to a wider world and share good practice.*

*Our new creative curriculum enables us to include elements of global learning more freely.*

There were also responses relating to the role of school leadership and the enthusiasm of individual staff:

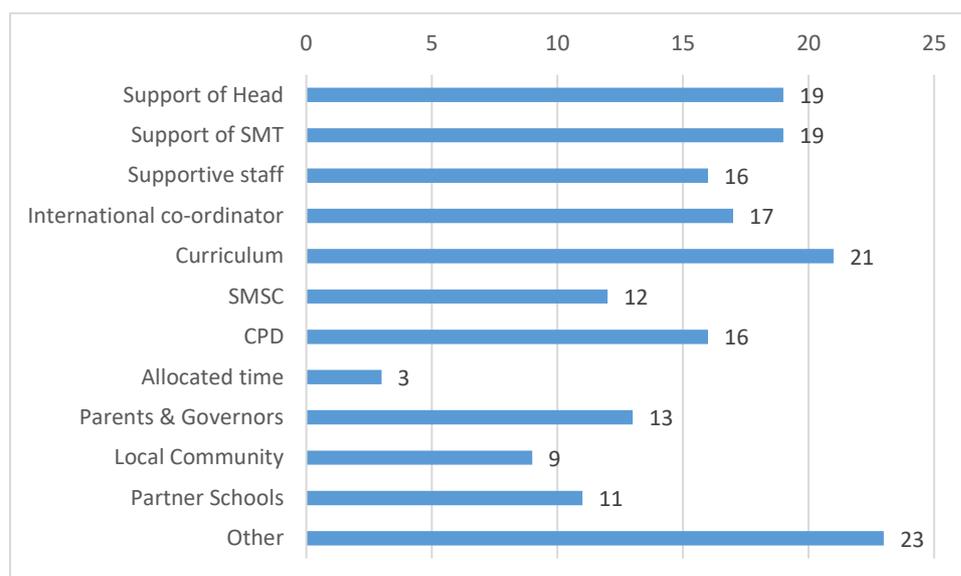
*Flexibility of approach, co-operation and enthusiasm are important factors which support global learning in our school.*

*Strong leadership at middle management and support from the governing body is a key factor.*

*Another key factor is our motivated international co-ordinator.*

One teacher highlights the important role pupils play in supporting global learning:

*A key factor is our many EAL pupils, they have to know themselves, where they come from and their identity. We encourage them to look beyond our local town and recognise the incredible opportunities that are created by diversity and richness of culture across our planet.*

**Figure 4: Key factors that support global learning in schools (N=30)**

Twenty-four schools also indicated there were other key factors that supported the global learning in their school and helped it to be sustainable. These are listed in table 2 below.

Pupils' interest in global learning was highlighted in four schools, as was working on British Council projects. Links with ICT were also seen as supporting this work, along with the development of the curriculum. Three schools highlighted the benefits of the links between MFL and global learning especially when working with partner schools in other countries.

Responses highlighted the benefits of ICT to promote global learning:

*The school uses social media and the school website to promote global learning.*

And the importance of links with the local community and parents:

*Civic links and town-twinning with Germany, China and Poland are important factors as well as hosting foreign visitors to our school.*

*We work closely with parents and the local community with all our global projects and try to involve them as much as possible.*

**Table 2: Additional key factors supporting global learning (N=24 schools)**

Other key factors supporting global learning	Number of schools
Links to other countries, e.g. Senegal, France, China	3
Awards (ISA)	1
Pupils involved as school global council members (e.g. via RRSA)	2
Middle management support	1
Pupils' interest	4
Motivated teachers	1
ICT infrastructure	4
British Council projects	4
High profile of global learning in school	1
Sustainable Development Goals	1
GLP online resources	1
Cross-curricula links	1
Links to MFL, including Mandarin	3

Culturally diverse staff and pupils	2
-------------------------------------	---

### 3.1.2 British Council workshop

In the first part of the British Council workshop, four groups of educators discussed the attributes they considered most important for a global learning school to be sustainable. They came up with the following pedagogical reasons that they considered to be some of the main areas that would help schools maintain sustainable global learning in their school (see table 4). They thought the main areas for sustainable global learning in schools should include: a global curriculum, diversity, teamwork, critical thinking, communication, attitudes and knowledge.

**Table 3: Areas considered to support sustainable global learning**

Attitude	Celebrating diversity
Knowledge	Global curriculum
Good communication	Global policy/statement
Team work	Engaging students in critical thinking
Using real-life examples	Creativity and imagination

Each of the four groups then designed a school that they thought would fully support sustainable global learning, and many had similar requirements that they considered necessary for success. The responses can be in illustrations 1 to 4.

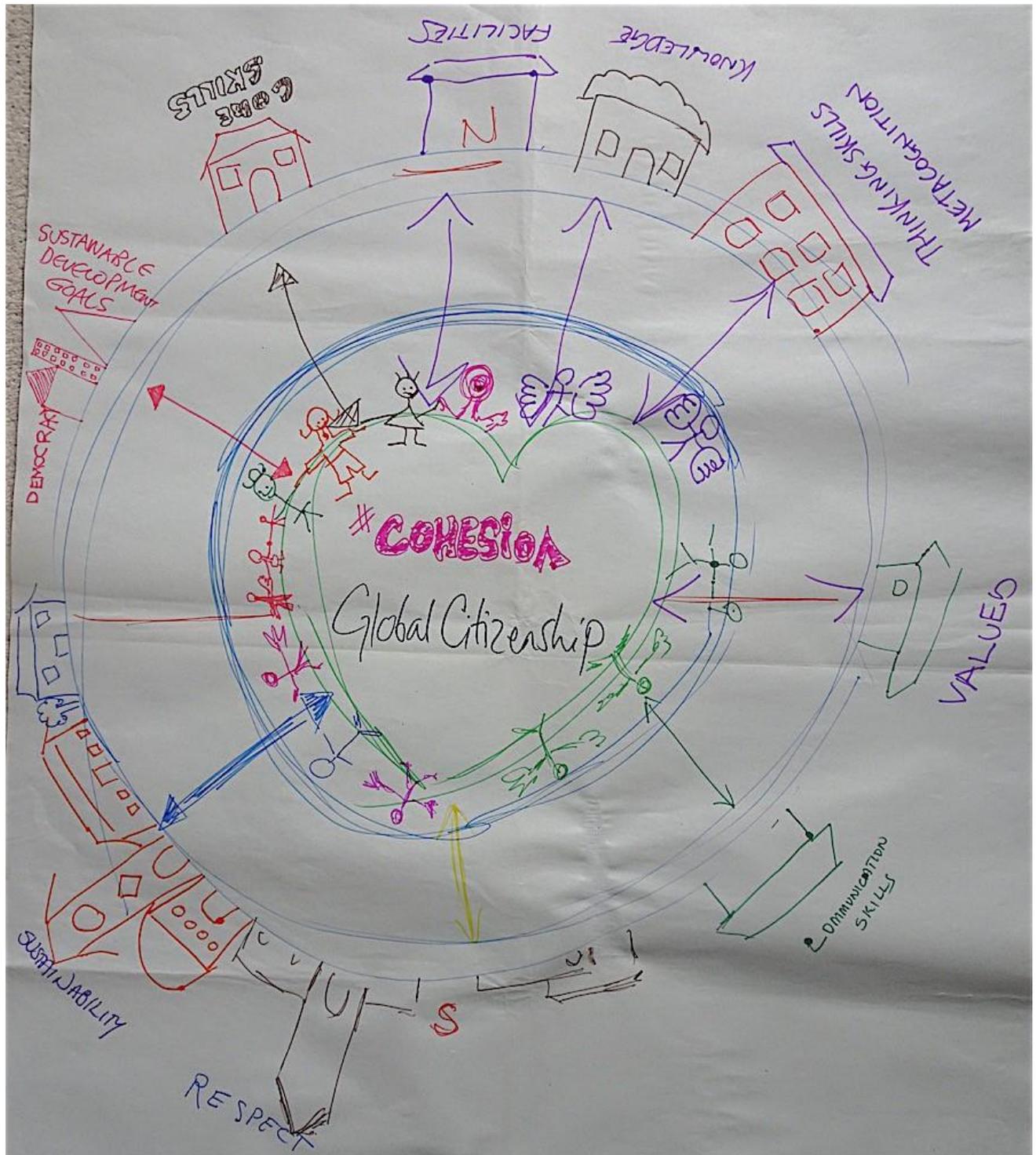
Illustration 1: BC group 1 – the community school



### Group 1

Group 1 decided that for any school to support sustainable global learning, the community should be at the centre of everything and the whole school should have global learning embedded as a policy. There should be a celebration of their own identity and that of others including cultural diversity. Skills developed would include: communication, co-operation, critical thinking and partnerships with other schools across the world, which would lead to 'real' life skills. The school would embrace an inclusive approach, value everyone equally and respect differences. This would enable the school and its pupils to be self-motivated and help raise standards. As a result of the school's efficiency, its success would no longer need to be based on SATs, league tables and Ofsted.

Illustration 2: BC group 2 – the cohesive school (part 1)



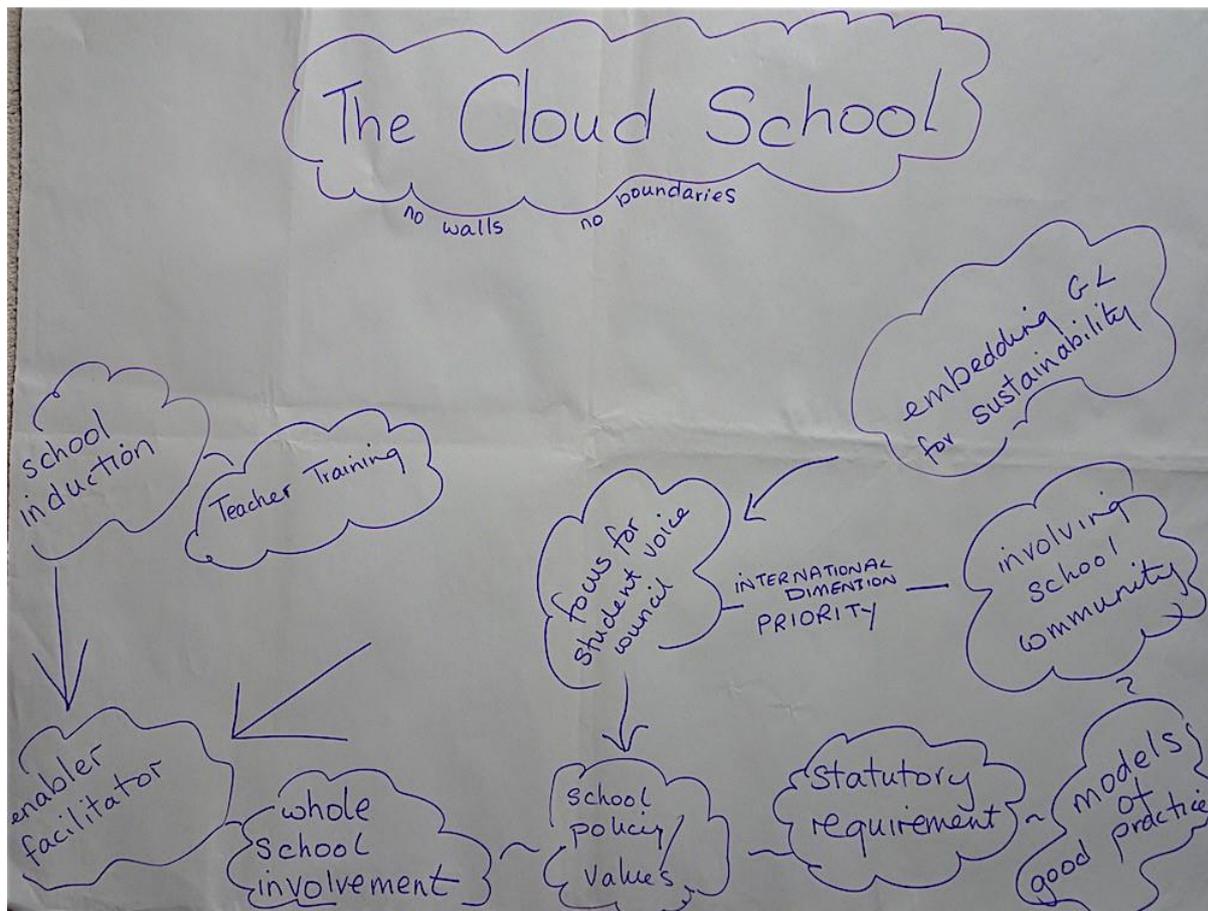
### Group 2

Group 2 decided that a cohesive school would support and sustain global citizenship and thought it should be built in the shape of a heart, to show empathy. The heart would be in the centre of a world compass, showing inclusion across the whole world. In order for it to succeed, it would need physical facilities to be built, it would be eco-friendly, and the Sustainable Development Goals and core skills would be at the heart of learning. The school would promote skills and values, such as communication, thinking, metacognition, democracy, respect and inclusiveness. Every part of the school would work together cohesively. Illustration

3 shows in more detail the elements that group 2 considered important for global learning to be sustainable in a school.

**Illustration 3: BC Group 2 – the cohesive school (part 2)**



**Illustration 4: BC group 3 – the cloud school****Group 3**

Group 3 named their school a cloud school, as it wouldn't have any walls or boundaries. Global learning would be embedded to ensure sustainability, and an international dimension would be a priority for this school. There would be a statutory requirement for the school community to be involved in this international dimension and the skills needed for implementing it. There would be a focus on student voice via a council, and models of good practice that could be used for inspiration. Values development would be a focus of the school. There would also be additional teacher training on global learning.

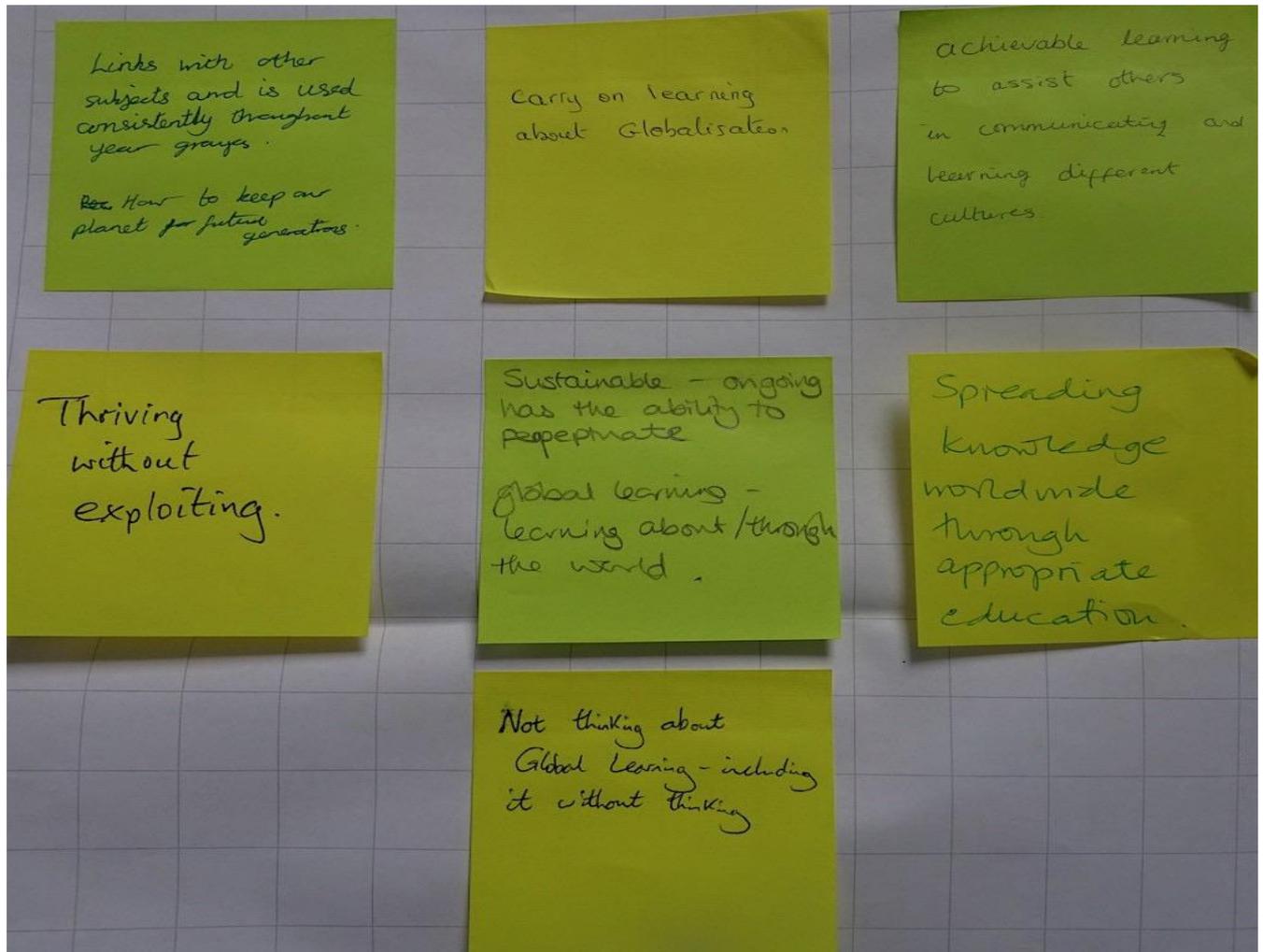
All three groups from this workshop highlighted the importance of skills, values and communication as important features of a school where global learning is sustainable.

**3.1.3 Expert Centre twilight training session**

In this section I look at findings from the ten delegates who attended the global learning twilight session I led with a group of local schools. The educators in this group were relatively new to global learning and were very concerned about how they could ensure that the global learning journey they had started on could be sustained in their respective schools. Their responses might reflect their newness to global learning, and their responses can be seen in comparison to the questionnaire respondents who were often more experienced in global learning. The group discussed the same questions as those at the British Council workshop (see above): What are the key factors that support sustainable global learning in schools?

Group 1 decided to display their results in a written format (illustration 5).

## Illustration 5: twilight group 1

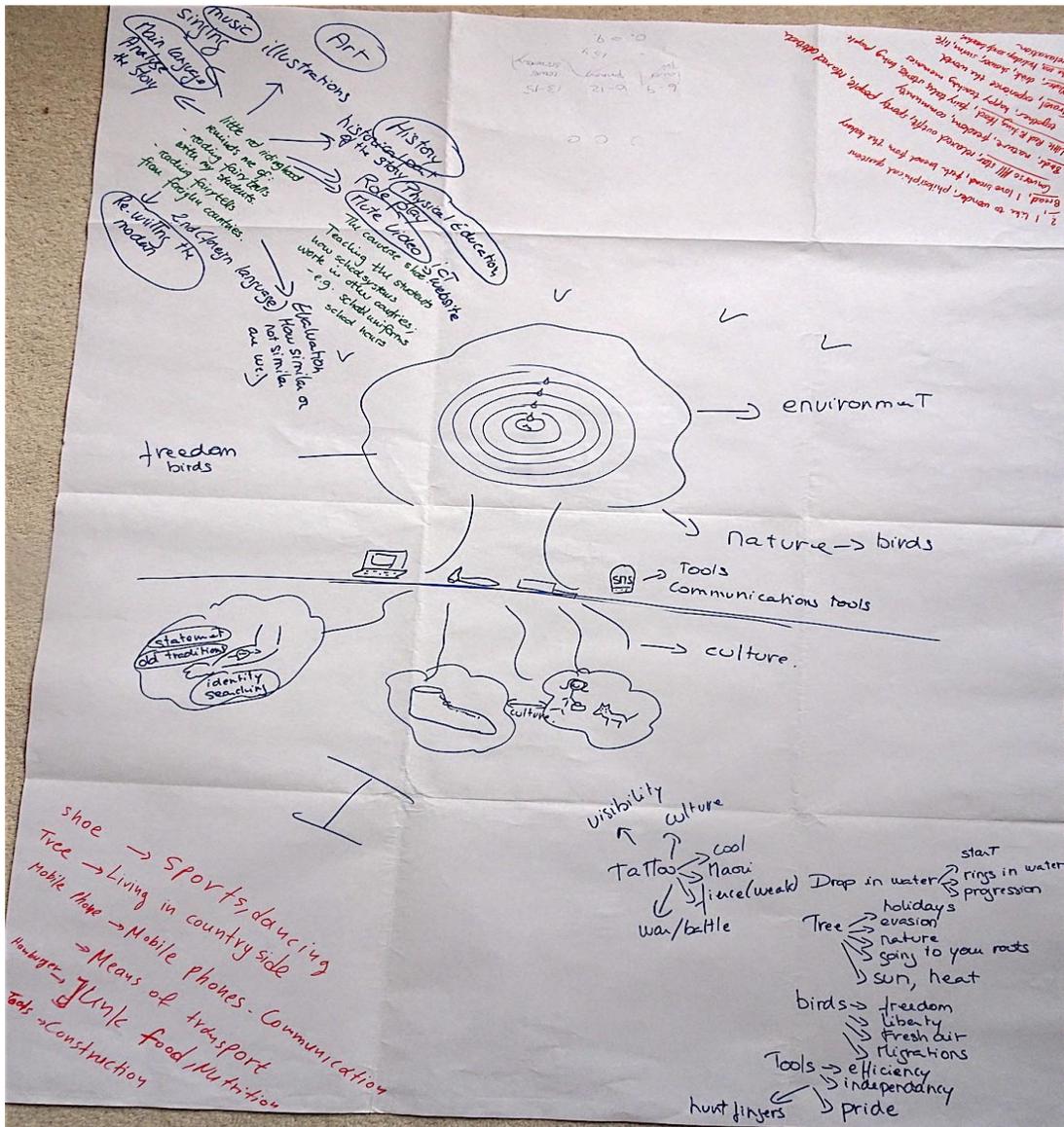


Group 1 in the twilight training thought a number of factors would support sustainability:

- including global learning without thinking about it
- embedding global learning across the curriculum and using it consistently across all age groups
- learning about different cultures and communicating with others.

The results of group 2 are shown in illustration 6 below.

Illustration 6: twilight group 2



Twilight group 2 decided that a successful, sustainable global school should encapsulate the environment, so designed it as a tree. The branches were depicted as a drop of water with rings of progression spreading out, covering all aspects of a global learning curriculum. An example they gave was the fairy tale of Little Red Riding Hood, which they linked to fairy tales in other countries. Work would include languages, music, art, PE, drama, English & ICT. The sturdy hidden roots of the tree below the ground spread out to include culture, identity and migration to support the work above ground. To ensure all of this was possible this group highlighted the need for reliable communication tools.

## 3.2 What factors make global learning more vulnerable in schools?

### 3.2.1 Online questionnaire responses

The 30 GLP participants in the online questionnaire highlighted several areas that could make global learning in their school vulnerable and that would mean they might be unable to sustain global learning. I collated these under highlighted themes in figure 5.

The most important factor was time pressures as described by two head teachers:

*Squeezing the curriculum as it is judged by results, along with school improvement priorities as an outcome of measures after SATs, can leave little time for quality global learning.*

*The lack of time due to other pressures does make fitting in global work challenging.*

Exam pressure on schools also has implications:

*Pressures of SATs data in key Year groups.*

*The pressure of league tables can prevent schools from interacting.*

'A change of leadership can make schools very vulnerable' was also considered as one of main reasons for making schools less likely to continue with global learning. Other respondents write:

*Our new senior leadership is not focused on global learning.*

*We've a small number of staff so a key person leaving makes a huge difference.*

*A change of leadership, lack of enthusiasm.*

*Change of leadership and school priorities, change of governance.*

The role and (lack of) enthusiasm of other staff and parents was also seen as important:

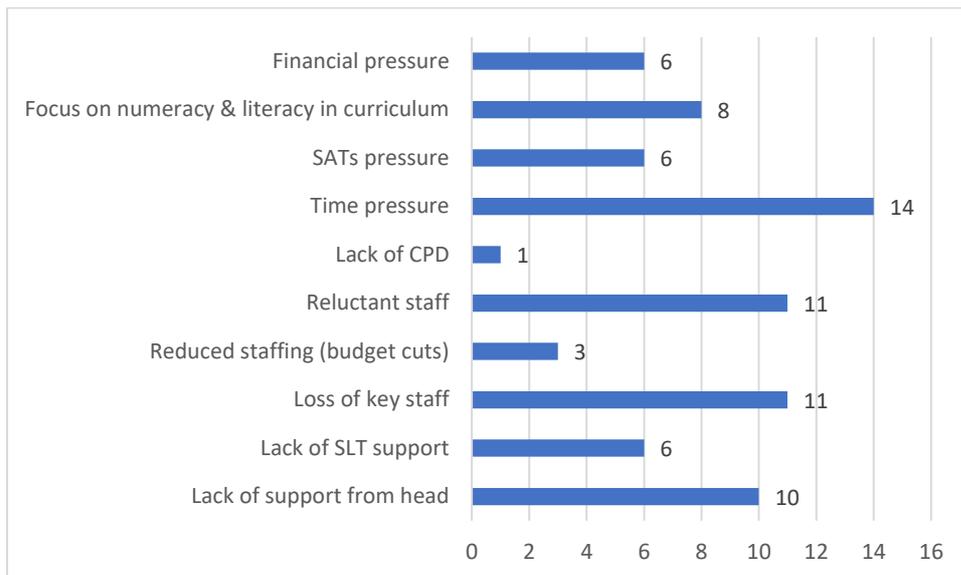
*Ignorance and lack of enthusiasm of some staff and bigoted views of the pupils and influence of family members and friends.*

*A 'charity' mentality from staff*

*Limited experience of visits to other countries to engage staff and pupils'*

One optimistic head teacher wrote:

*Not applicable. This school will remain focused on this aspect/perspective of global learning.*

**Figure 5: Key factors that make global learning vulnerable in schools (N=30)**

(Source: questionnaire q. 7).

As can be seen from figure 5, the time pressure makes global learning vulnerable in schools, as does a change of staff and reluctant staff. Budget cuts and CPD are the least important aspects from the online questionnaire findings.

### 3.2.2 British Council workshop

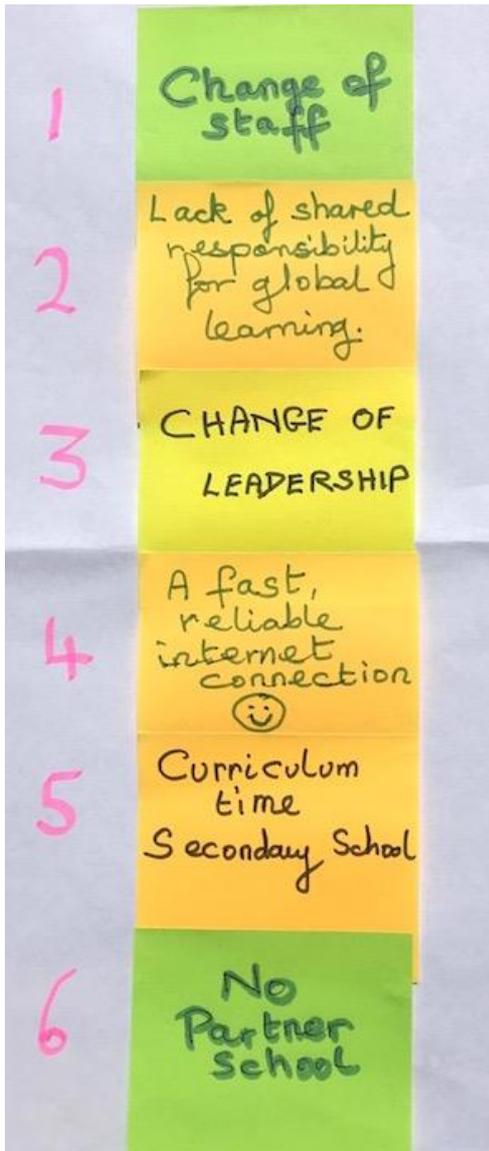
Participants in the British Council workshop also answered the question: What factors make schools vulnerable and unable to maintain global learning?

Each group considered what they individually thought would make their school unable to maintain global learning, then sorted the answers in their groups in order of importance.

A number of factors feature strongly such as:

- Time pressures
- Lack of support from SMT
- Political directive
- Staff unwilling to engage/change.

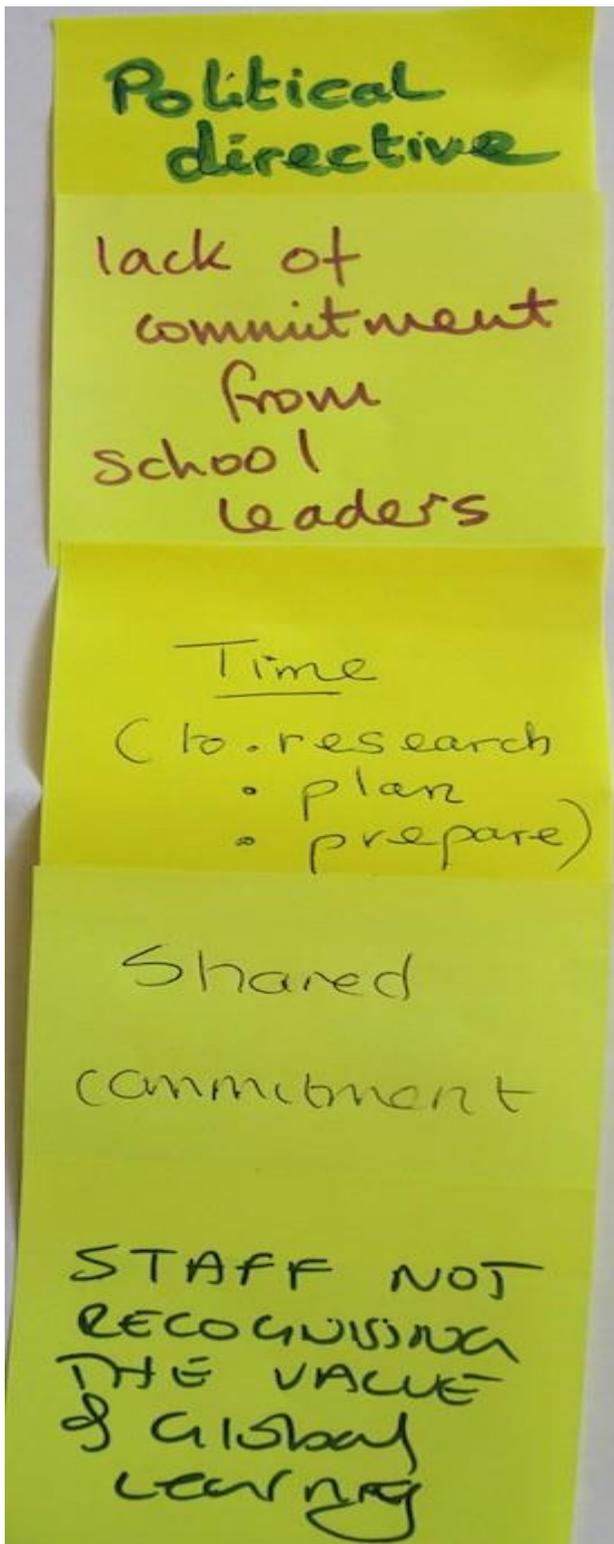
See the results from these groups in illustrations **7 to 10 below**

**Illustration 7: BC group 1 responses**

Group 1's concerns are shown in illustration 7. The most important factor that could make global learning vulnerable for this group was a change of staff, with the lack of shared responsibility for global learning coming second. The lack of fast reliable internet connection was also seen as a problem, especially when schools are trying to collaborate across the world.

A change of staff was also seen as a major factor in the online questionnaires (see 3.2.1).

### Illustration 8: BC group 2 responses

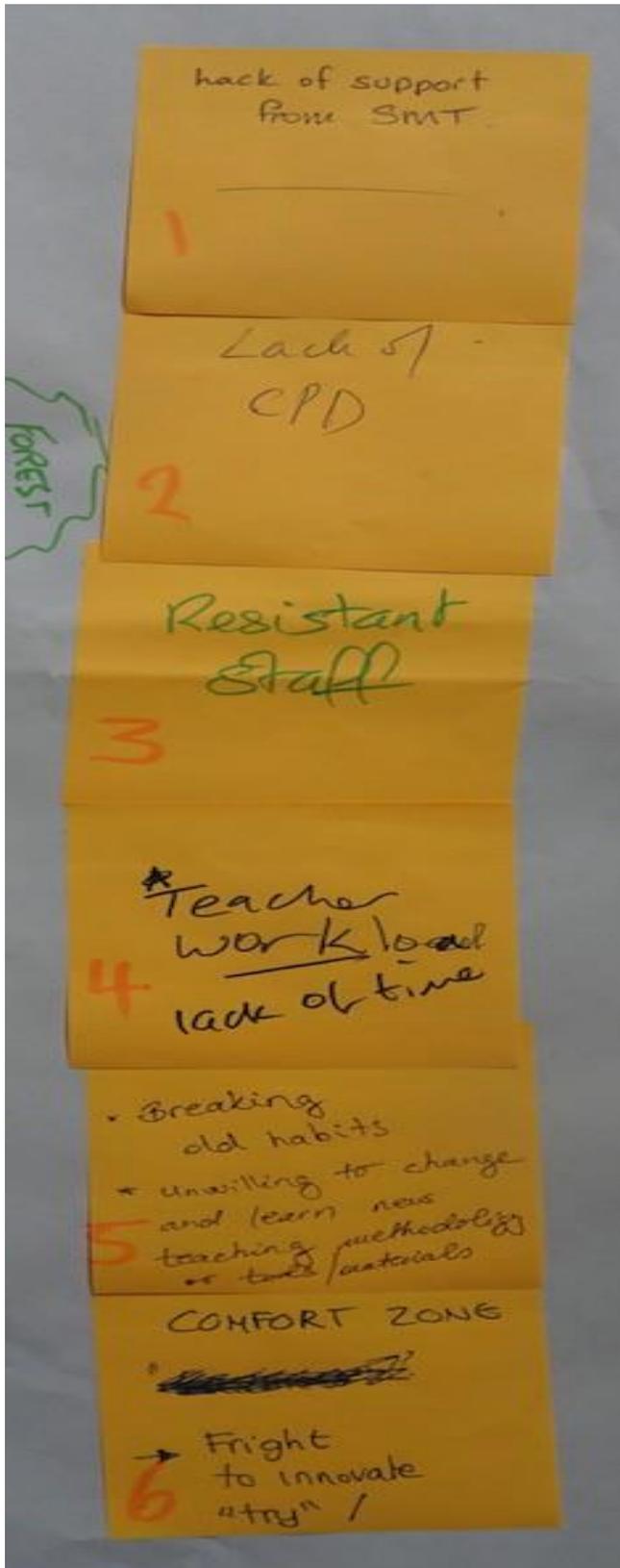


Responses from group 2 can be seen in Illustration 8. They thought a change in political direction from the government would make global learning more vulnerable in schools. A lack of support from school leaders was also an issue. And, as in the online results, time was an important factor.

Group 2 decided that teachers needed allocated time for research, planning and preparation if global learning was going to be sustainable.

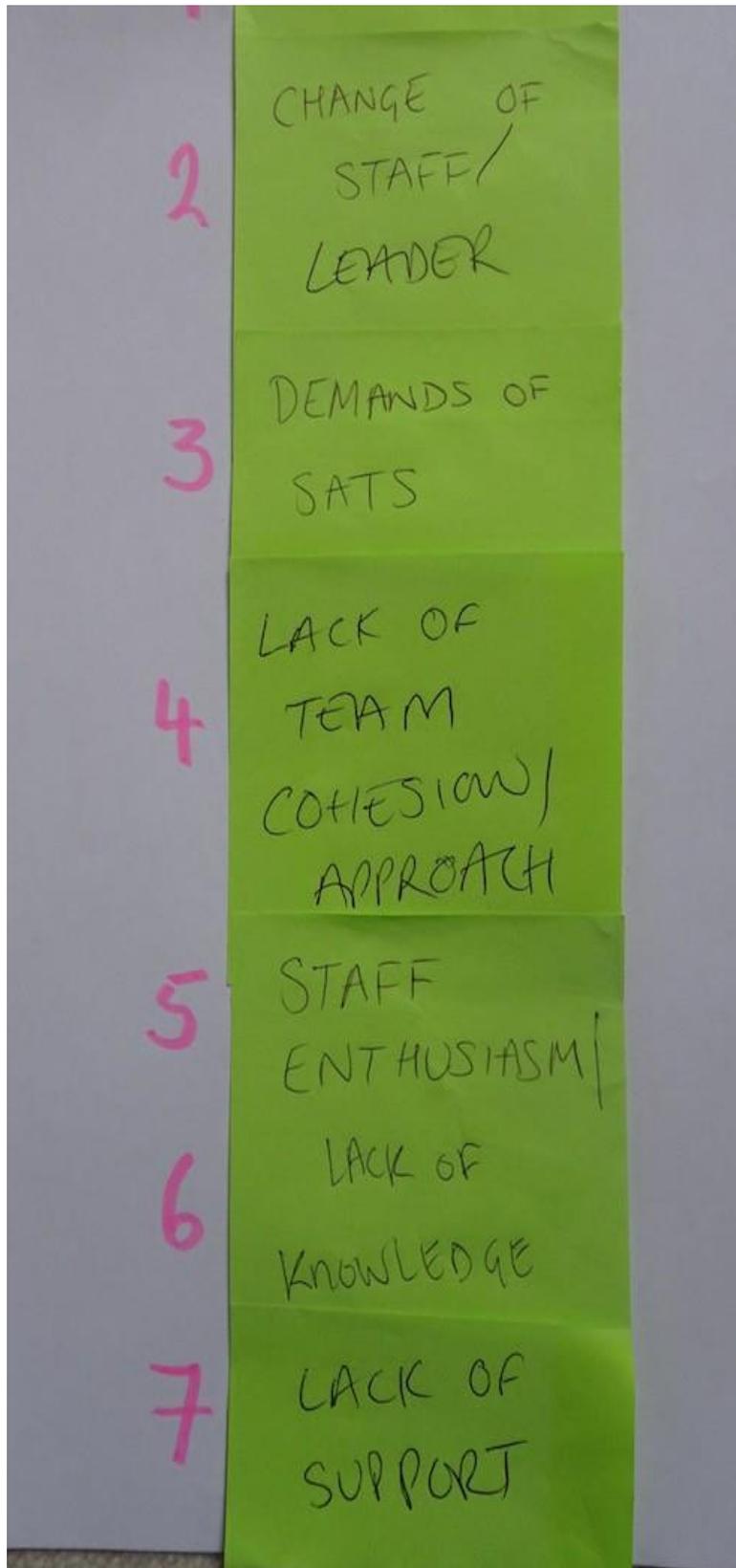
Reluctant staff, who did not realise the value of global learning were also a problem, which was also highlighted in the findings of the online questionnaires (see: 3.2.1).

### Illustration 9: BC group 3 responses



Responses from group 3 can be seen in Illustration 9: BC group 3 responses

Their biggest concern was a lack of support from the SMT for global learning and a lack of CPD (although CPD was not considered very important in the online questionnaire). Their concerns that some teachers were reluctant to change old habits and move out of their comfort zones was at the bottom of their list, but this group did consider it an issue. This was also considered an important factor in the online questionnaire (see: 3.2.1).

**Illustration 10: BC group 4 responses**

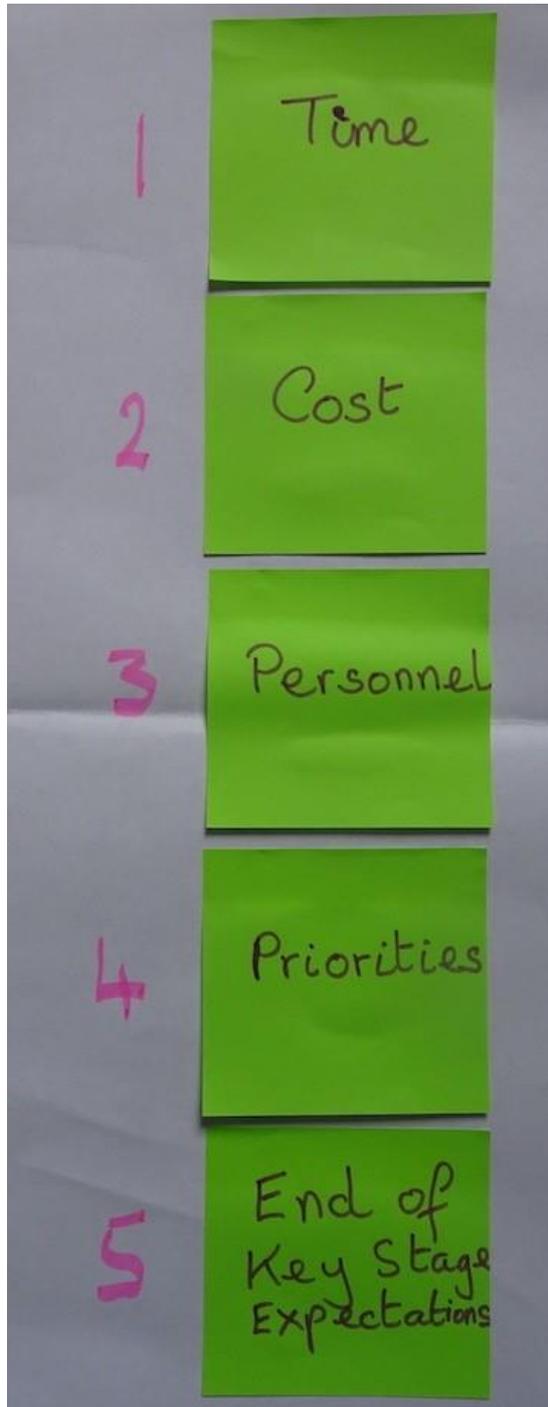
Group 4 responses can be found in Illustration 10. They decided that a lack of time made global learning vulnerable in schools (this agreed with findings of the online questionnaire 3.2.1). This was followed closely by change of staff and the pressures of SATs. It is interesting to note that the lack of knowledge and enthusiasm of staff is seen as a contributing factor as well.

### 3.2.3 Expert centre twilight training session

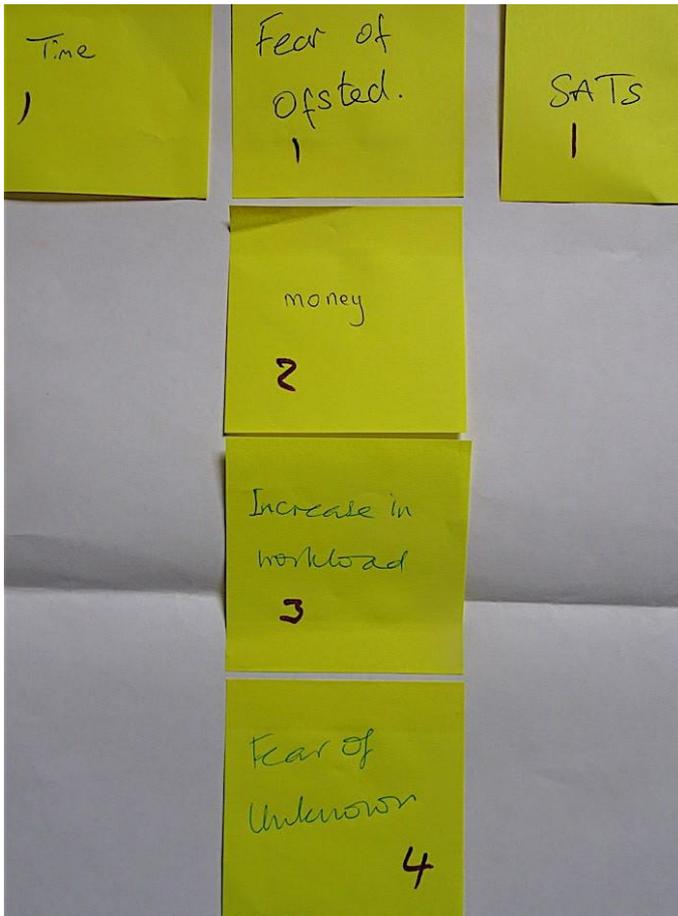
Participants at the Expert Centre twilight training session were also asked: What factors make schools vulnerable and unable to maintain global learning?

The two twilight groups considered what they thought would make their school unable to fulfill this. They came up with the following results (**illustrations 11 and 12**), which show their concerns as schools new to global learning.

#### Illustration 11: twilight group 1 responses



Twilight group 1 results can be seen in Illustration 11. They decided that time was the most important factor that made global learning vulnerable in schools (see online questionnaire responses also). They felt there needed to be allocated time for CPD of staff, research and planning. These teachers thought that cost was an issue as teachers needed to be free from their classrooms to lead this work, and school budgets were not always able to cover this. Again, Key Stage expectations were seen as a problem.

**Illustration 12: twilight group 2 responses**

Time was again the main concern for this last group as can be seen in Illustration 12. They also decided that Ofsted and SATs were of equal importance in terms of making global learning vulnerable in schools. These teachers could not see how they would fit the work into their already full timetables. The unforeseen cost was also highlighted as they were including staff release time to co-ordinate the global learning work. The envisaged extra workload and fear of the unknown were also important factors.

### 3.3 How might schools prepare themselves to enhance the sustainability of global learning?

Respondents to the online questionnaire were asked how they might prepare to help ensure sustainable global learning in schools. They were asked: What advice would you give other schools?

There were a variety of suggestions as to how schools might support sustainable global learning in their school<sup>9</sup>.

Suggestions included getting involved in activities the school can latch onto. One suggested that it was easier to start with a whole-school initiative that everyone can get behind and suggested the 'Send my Friend to School' campaign.

Other responses promoted the importance of global learning in the curriculum:

*Ensure there are key purposeful opportunities within the curriculum across the school to engage global learning.*

*Build the curriculum around it*

*Make sure that global learning is part of the curriculum and is not an add-on.*

*It needs to be woven into the curriculum and the whole school need to be involved not just half the staff or it isn't sustainable.*

*It must be embedded into the curriculum and accessible through cross curricular learning.*

Some respondents highlight links to other schools:

*Visit or talk to another school that has successful global learning embedded in its curriculum.*

*Schools should join a local GLP cluster as it's a brilliant way to share ideas and to regenerate enthusiasm.*

Setting up systems across whole schools, involving pupils, teachers and local communities was also suggested:

*Have a student from each class as a "Global Councillor" and hold regular meetings with this group.*

*Enthusiasm, flexibility and staff belief will go a long way in sustaining global learning in a school*

*Make sure the whole school is involved not just one or two teachers, otherwise it won't be sustainable. Invite parents into celebration assemblies and share your global learning work on Twitter, local parish magazines and newspapers.*

*Create a global pupil committee (a sub group of school council) and support your staff with enthusiasm, self-belief and the knowledge that flexibility is important.*

The following participant had some very easy and practical ideas to encourage any school starting on their journey of global learning:

- *Get involved in national campaigns and initiatives*
- *Plan the projects in the school calendar*
- *Celebrate your achievement with the local community*

Finally one head teacher just starting on their global learning journey wrote:

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<sup>9</sup> 20% of respondents did not answer this question.

*Get involved, get started, see how flexible and valuable the work that can come under the global learning umbrella can be. Do not be afraid to ask for help. Be brave.*

### 3.4 Triangulating evidence

The Likert Questionnaire (Table 4) found in the questionnaires, covers the three main questions in this research and supports the previous findings (it can be found in both questionnaires).

Responses have been colour coded for ease of interpretation.

- What factors support the sustainability of global learning in schools? (related questions in orange)
- What factors make schools vulnerable and unable to maintain global learning? (related questions have no colour)
- How might schools prepare themselves to enhance the sustainability of global learning? (related questions are in blue)

The questions relate to global learning and respondents were asked to tick the column they think is the most appropriate for their school.

**Table 4: Responses to questions about global learning in their school (N=30)**

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	Engages whole school community	40%	43%	10%	7%	
2	Enhances social skills	33%	60%	7%		
3	Fitting it into the curriculum is a problem	3%	43%	7%	36%	10%
4	Difficult finding suitably qualified staff to lead global learning	3%	20%	30%	43%	3%
5	Time implications are a problem	17%	40%	7%	33%	3%
6	Problem if key member of staff leaves	30%	36%	27%	3%	3%
7	Difficult to find reliable partner schools	10%	23%	27%	33%	7%
8	Advisable to include in the school budget	13%	50%	30%	7%	
9	Not a priority	10%	13%	10%	60%	7%
10	There are problems monitoring global learning in every class	10%	23%	30%	30%	7%
11	There is easy access to global learning resources	13%	60%	17%	7%	3%
12	Evaluation of global learning is challenging	3%	27%	53%	13%	3%
13	Fits in with British Values	47%	50%	3%		
14	Promotes critical thinking	47%	53%			

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
15	Enriches the curriculum	83%	17%			
16	Should be embedded into the curriculum	73%	27%			
17	Motivates students	57%	40%	3%		
18	Is an add on to the curriculum	3%	10%	23%	40%	23%
19	Raises standards	13%	70%	17%		
20	Prepares students for life in a diverse and global world	80%	20%			

These results show that all teachers either strongly agreed or agreed to the following statements, relating to global learning in their school:

- It promotes critical thinking
- It enriches the curriculum
- It should be embedded into the curriculum
- It prepares students for life in a diverse and global world

The large majority of respondents agreed that global learning in their school:

- fits in with British Values
- motivates students
- enhances social skills

In relation to concerns about global learning in schools:

- 66% thought it was a problem if a key member of staff leaves
- 57% thought time pressure was a problem
- 63% of respondents thought global learning should be included in the school budget
- 100% thought it should be in the curriculum.

## 4 Conclusions and recommendations

The purpose of this study was to find answers to the focus question:

*'How can we ensure that global learning is sustainable in schools?'*

The study looked at the initiatives and activities that are being embraced in schools that have sustainable global learning. The study also looked at the problems that can lead to global learning being vulnerable in schools and what recommendations are needed to change this.

The study found the following key points from the findings that were gathered through the qualitative and quantitative data; these are shown under five sub headings.

### 4.1 Initiatives and activities that support sustainable global learning

- 50% of the schools were engaged with global work before the start of GLP. Most of these schools became GLP Expert Centres and were confident in leading global learning sessions, building on previous experience.
- 60% highlighted the importance of the head teacher, SMT and international co-ordinator as key to ensuring the success of global learning.
- 73% said that embedding global learning across the curriculum was vital for its success.
- 53% supported the value of CPD linked to a global curriculum.

- The majority of schools used one of the many British Council programmes to support global learning, with eTwinning and the International School Award schemes being used by over 80%. Over half of the research group used Fairtrade activities in their schools.
- Delegates at the British Council conference agreed that the main areas for sustainable global learning in schools should include: a global curriculum, diversity, team work, critical thinking, communication, attitude and knowledge

#### **4.2 Problems that can lead to a school being unable to sustain global learning**

The following factors were seen as making global learning vulnerable in schools.

- Pressure of time was highlighted in questionnaires and workshop responses as an important reason why global learning might fail.
- The loss of key staff was considered an important factor, especially in small schools where it makes a big difference.
- The lack of support from the head teacher for global learning had a very negative effect, especially when there had been a change of leadership in the school
- Staff not recognising the value of global learning was also seen as a disadvantage for schools.
- There was also a suggestion that too much emphasis on Ofsted and external exams might affect the sustainability of global learning.

#### **4.3 Advice for schools preparing for global learning**

There were various pieces of advice to schools to support the sustainability of their global learning. These included:

- getting involved in different initiatives
- embedding it in the curriculum
- supporting global learning across the whole school
- including the whole school community

#### **4.4 Recommendations**

The findings from this small-scale research show the many initiatives and activities that can be gained for schools and students when they engage with global learning, and draws attention to some of the problems facing schools and how these might be overcome. It also provides some advice to others, who are looking to establish global learning in their schools.

This is a small-scale study, and more future research is needed to understand some of the complexities of sustaining global learning initiatives in schools. Importantly case studies of good practice would provide information to other schools that have managed to maintain a global learning presence, even when going through periods of change.

## 5 Appendices

### 5.1 Appendix 1: British Council Ambassadors' workshop questionnaire

'How can Ambassadors ensure that global learning is sustainable in schools?'

*I would appreciate it if you could complete the following questionnaire as this would form part of a research project that I'm doing as part of the Global Learning Programme (GLP) Innovation Fund in England. The GLP Innovation Fund is supported by the Development Education Research Centre, at UCL Institute of Education.*

Q1: Please circle your responses to the following three questions:

Current position: Head Teacher, SLT/SMT, Subject Co-ordinator (please state subject area)  
Class Teacher, Retired Teacher, Advisor, Other

Educational establishment you work in: Infant, Junior, Primary, Secondary, Further Education, Special Education, Other

The area of the UK you work in: East of England, East Midlands, London, North East, North West, South East, South West, West Midlands, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland

Q2: Has your school been involved with the Global Learning Programme?

Yes	No

Q3: If Yes to question 2, was your school an Expert Centre?

Yes	No

Q4: If Yes to 2, would you be prepared to answer more detailed questions at a later stage if required?

Yes	No

Q5: What key factors do you think support sustainable global learning in your school?

Q6: What key factors could make your school unable to sustain global learning?

Q7: Do you have pupils who are Global Ambassadors in your school? If so could you explain their role?

Q8: How do you ensure that global learning is sustainable in your school? (awards, links with other schools)

Q9: Please grade the following statements about global learning by a tick in the column which you think is the most appropriate for your school.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Engages whole school community					
Enhances social skills					

Fitting it into the curriculum is a problem					
Difficult finding suitably qualified staff to lead global learning					
Time implications are a problem					
Problem if key member of staff leaves					
There were difficulties in finding reliable partner schools					
Advisable to include in the school budget					
Lack of suitable courses					
Not a priority					
Problems in monitoring every class					
Suitable material for all age groups readily accessible					
Evaluation is challenging					
Fits in with British Values					
Promotes critical thinking					
Enriches the curriculum					
Should be embedded into the curriculum					
Motivates students					
Is an add on to the curriculum					
Raises standards					
Prepares students for life in a diverse and global world					

### Research ethics

The aim of this research is to find out what helps motivate schools to sustain their global learning and what problems that they might encounter to prevent this happening.

With our increasingly networked world, it is important for students to understand how they become valuable global citizens.

\*Confidentiality and anonymity will be guaranteed for teachers, pupils and schools. No sensitive data will be collected and participants will not be identifiable outside the school. Any data used will ensure teacher/pupil contributions and school names are anonymised and are confidential.

\*Inclusion in the research is voluntary. Teachers, pupils and schools can withdraw from the research at any time.

I agree to take part in this research project. I understand the research ethics information involved. I understand that my participation is voluntary and I can stop taking part at any time.

Name: (voluntary)

School:

Date:

Signature

## 5.2 Appendix 2: Questions for GLP primary schools

I would appreciate it if you could complete the following questionnaire as this would form part of a research project that I'm doing as part of the Global Learning Programme (GLP) Innovation Fund in England. The GLP Innovation Fund is supported by the Development Education Research Centre, at UCL Institute of Education. Please contact me, Colette Cotton, if you have any queries about this research:

Details of research ethics can be found at the end of the questionnaire.

School Name:

Your Name:

Current Position:

Was your school a GLP Expert Centre?

Yes	No

### Research question

I'm doing some research as part of my study for the Global Learning Programme Innovation Fund to try to find out the main factors that contribute to global learning being sustainable in schools. My main research question is: 'How can we ensure that global learning is sustainable in schools?'

1. Why did your school get involved in global learning? Were there any specific trigger points?
2. Why is global learning important for teachers and pupils?
3. How long has your school been working on global learning?
4. What are the key factors that support global learning in your school?
5. Has your school been involved with any other projects and programmes that support global learning? (e.g. Connecting Classrooms, eTwinning, ISA, Fairtrade, Send my Friend to School, UNICEF's Rights Respecting Schools, NGO work). If so, what?
6. Do you think it is important to support the sustainability of global learning in schools? If so, why?
7. What key factors could make your school vulnerable and unable to sustain global learning?
8. What key factors support sustainable global learning in your school? (these might include aspects such as: SLT, Curriculum, CPD, SDGs, values, embedding, linking to community, other)

9. Have you any examples of how your school has supported the sustainability of global learning?
10. How would you suggest other schools might prepare themselves to encourage the sustainability of global learning?
11. Do you have any recommendations and advice for other schools based on your experience of global learning`?
12. Please grade the following statements about global learning by a tick in the column which you think is the most appropriate for your school.

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	Engages whole school community					
2	Enhances social skills					
3	Fitting it into the curriculum is a problem					
4	Difficult finding suitably qualified staff to lead global learning					
5	Time implications are a problem					
6	Problem if key member of staff leaves					
7	Difficult to find reliable partner schools					
8	Advisable to include in the school budget					
9	Not a priority					
10	There are problems monitoring global learning in every class					
11	There is easy access to global learning resources					
12	Evaluation of global learning is challenging					
13	Fits in with British Values					
14	Promotes critical thinking					
15	Enriches the curriculum					
16	Should be embedded into the curriculum					
17	Motivates students					
18	Is an add on to the curriculum					
19	Raises standards					
20	Prepares students for life in a diverse and global world					

### Research ethics

The aim of this research is to find out what helps motivate schools to sustain their global learning and what problems that they might encounter to prevent this happening.

With our increasingly networked world, it is important for students to understand how they become valuable global citizens

\*Confidentiality and anonymity will be guaranteed for teachers, pupils and schools. No sensitive data will be collected and participants will not be identifiable outside the school. Any data used will ensure teacher/pupil contributions and school names are anonymised and are confidential.

\*Inclusion in the research is voluntary. Teachers, pupils and schools can withdraw from the research at any time.

\*All data will be stored securely and deleted once the research is finalised. It will not be passed on to anyone else.

I agree to take part in this research project. I understand the research ethics information involved. I understand that my participation is voluntary and I can stop taking part at any time.

Name: (voluntary)

School:

Date:

Signature

## 6 References

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### **About the author**

Colette has been a primary school teacher for many years and studied for an MA in Education in 1988. Since 2004 she has been the International coordinator at a large Kent primary school, where video/conferencing, school exchanges and working with partner schools has been a major part of this work. As a CEOP ambassador, Colette runs E-Safety training for both teachers and students, from Kenya to Kent. She is also an Ambassador for e-Twinning and the British Council, supporting schools world-wide in their use of ICT and encouraging world collaborative projects. She is an educational advisor for <http://www.barefootbillion.com>, inclusive project linked to world child poverty collaborating work from schools in over 75 countries. Colette is currently researching the value of international links for primary age students.

### **About the Global Learning Programme**

The Global Learning Programme (GLP) in England was a government-funded programme of support that is helping teachers in Primary, Secondary and Special schools to deliver effective teaching and learning about development and global issues at Key Stages 2 and 3. It was delivered by a team of organisations with complementary experience in supporting development education, the wider development sector and peer-led CPD for schools. For further information on the Global Learning Programme in England go to: [www.glp-e.org.uk](http://www.glp-e.org.uk) Information about the GLP in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland can be found at: <https://globaldimension.org.uk/chooseglp>

### **About the Development Education Research Centre**

The Development Education Research Centre (DERC) is the UK's leading research centre for development education and global learning. DERC conducts research on Development Education and Global Learning, run a masters' degree course, supervises doctoral students and produces a range of reports, academic articles and books. Further information on the centre go to: [www.ucl.ac.uk/ioe-derc](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/ioe-derc)

Development Education Research Centre

UCL Institute of Education

London International Development Centre,

36 Gordon Square, London WC1H 0PD