

HOW DO WE DEAL WITH GLOBAL ISSUES?

The following statements are from teachers exploring strategies for engaging with issues. Teachers could individually identify one statement which in their experience raises an important challenge. What have they chosen and why?

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| <p><i>It is necessary to start with children's personal experience. It matters to know what children may be dealing with, especially as it may be sensitive.</i></p> | <p><i>It is worth being up front about your views, especially with older children. There's usually a steer, to be honest, and you can't separate yourself from the issues. You can disclose your own bias, however.</i></p> | <p><i>It is important to acknowledge that issues are complex and that people have different views on them.</i></p> |
| <p><i>Institutional commitments have to be taken into account. For example, a 'bottom line' on the school's anti-racist or anti-sexist commitments may effectively be non-negotiable.</i></p> | <p><i>With emotionally sensitive issues it is useful to use drama to let children get outside themselves, explore the issue as 'someone else'.</i></p> | <p><i>Understanding the world is like a crucible: we mix things together in the bowl — ideas, images, stories, feelings — and children make sense of them.</i></p> |
| <p><i>It is important to build trust and establish ground rules, a 'no penalty zone', so that what is said doesn't come back on children.</i></p> | <p><i>What you can deal with will depend on what is happening in the wider world [eg after September 11th 2001, it was important to respond to children's concerns and confusions — even though we were concerned and confused ourselves].</i></p> | <p><i>Timing of when to tackle an issue is important [eg the end of the day is not good if there are issues to be resolved].</i></p> |
| <p><i>It is helpful to have an orientating task to focus work [eg creating a poster or leaflet].</i></p> | <p><i>What matters is 'living humanly'. Understanding and imagination, as such, can be either corruptive or creative. Terrible things have been done by intelligent, creative people.</i></p> | <p><i>Teachers need to be aware of their own cultural, social and ethical baggage and emotional limitations. Teachers are part of the 'total social fact'.</i></p> |