

Food Activism in the Schoolyard

Summary Report

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Contents

Food Activism in the Schoolyard.....	1
Executive Summary.....	4
Key findings	4
1. Introduction.....	5
2. Food Activism	6
3. The policy landscape.....	7
4. Aims of the project.....	8
5. Methodology	9
6. Workshop events.....	10
6.1 Dialogues	10
7. Workshop one. What do we understand by ‘Food Activism’?	11
7.1 Key messages from the first event	14
8. Workshop two. From soil to fork: different facets of food activism.....	14
8.1 Key messages.....	15
9. Workshop 3. Next steps for food activism in Scotland.....	16
9.1 Key messages.....	19
10. The Learning for Sustainability Framework	20
11. The Framework for Food Activism	21
12. Recommendations.....	23

Executive Summary

This project aimed to develop an operational framework for enabling practitioners in schools to engage with food as a central dimension in the lives of all young people, and as a key topic of Learning for Sustainability. Three workshop events were held involving stakeholders from different sectors to share experiences of food growing and food education both in Scotland and internationally, with a view to identifying current needs and opportunities for synergy between policy, research and practice.

This report collates the key lessons learned from the workshops. It provides insights into the extent to which the Scottish education community is currently addressing the question of food sustainability as an issue that is relevant to all young people; both as individuals and members of a wider community. It also presents the Learning for Sustainability Framework and the Food Activism Framework developed as part of the project.

Key findings

1. There is growing interest in food and food education from a variety of sectors.
2. Adult participants recognised the need for learning about food from a community-level and inter-generational perspective, as opposed to being the sole responsibility of particular teachers in schools.
3. An integrated approach to teaching about food that is grounded in young people's direct experiences is needed if they are to be engaged in taking a stance on food sustainability.
4. An explicit connection needs to be made across the school curriculum between micro, meso and macro issues of food production and environmental sustainability, if children are to feel that their own actions might matter in global concerns.
5. There is a need for greater involvement of teacher education institutions in enabling future teachers to address the topic of food as an element of Learning for Sustainability.
6. Food activism is a shared concern that requires attention from all.

1. Introduction

Food is essential to human survival, yet food production is one of the main factors undermining the environment supporting all living forms. Livestock farming alone uses more than 70% of agricultural land overall, contributing to Carbon emissions and loss of biodiversity from soil erosion and deforestation^{1,2}. As noted by the Food and Agriculture Organisation “climate change, increased demand for food, rise in food prices, higher fuel input cost and loss of agriculture skills and human resources”³ are key issues which affect quality, availability and access to healthy food for people in the years to come.

This situation has profound implications for young people. In the UK, estimates since 2014 suggest that around 10% to 15% of people aged 15 or over are moderately to severely food insecure⁴ and at risk from over-consumption of ultra-processed food⁵, with evidence linking poor physical health and poor nutritional quality with social, economic and educational inequalities⁶. However, concerns about food security add to the widespread lack of understanding of the general population about the origins of their food. One in ten UK secondary school pupils believe that tomatoes grow underground, while 18% had never visited a farm⁷. The consumption of food is largely separate from the process of growing and so is the eating, separate from the wider agricultural process that connects human communities with the Biosphere upon which we all depend⁸.

This project aims to bring the topic of food to the attention of practitioners in education. The recent protests and marches for climate change have shown that there is growing awareness amongst young people about global environmental problems, such as climate change, with its compounded issues of resource consumption and environmental degradation. However, answers to systemic problems - such as food sustainability and climate change - go beyond

¹ Garnett, T. (2013). Food sustainability: problems, perspectives and solutions.

Proceedings of the Nutrition Society , Volume 72 , Issue 1 , February 2013, pp. 29 - 39

² Godfray, H.C., Pretty, J., Thomas, S.M., Warham, E. J., Beddington, J. R. (2011). Linking Policy on Climate and Food. *Science*, 331, 1013-1014.

³ FAO. (2010). School Gardens. A New Deal for School Gardens. <https://doi.org/10.1038/061455a>

⁴ Scottish Government. (2016). Introducing the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2016. Edinburgh.

⁵ Rauber F, Louzada MLDC, Martinez Steele E, Rezende LFM, Millett C, Monteiro CA, Levy RB. (2019). Ultra-processed foods and excessive free sugar intake in the UK: a nationally representative cross-sectional study. *BMJ Open*. Oct 28; 9(10):e027546.

⁶ Public Health England. (2014). The link between pupil health and wellbeing and attainment A briefing for head teachers, governors and staff in education settings.

⁷ British Nutrition Foundation (2013). Annual Accounts 2013-2014. Available at: [763 BNF Annual Report 2013-14.pdf \(nutrition.org.uk\)](https://www.bnf.org.uk/annual-reports/2013-14.pdf)

⁸ Berry, W. (2009). [The Pleasures of Eating | ecoliteracy.org](http://ecoliteracy.org)

regulatory or behaviourist approaches of ‘healthy eating’⁹. They call instead for a different form of education, one that encourages and supports communities to take a proactive and inquiring stance¹⁰ on matters that affect them directly, in their everyday lives¹¹; and one that encourages young people to see themselves as part of the solution. Hence, this project asked: what place does education about food play in building such awareness? What conditions, approaches and knowledge would enable young people in school to play an active role in matters related to food, decision-making and power?

2. Food Activism

“People acting to change the food system or speaking out against it [...], [and to] take charge of food production, distribution [and consumption]” (p.3)¹² is defined as food activism. The concept of food activism has its roots primarily in the response of small producers in the Global South to decreasing levels of control over land, production practices, and food access¹³. While ‘activism’ in general terms resonates with political protests and resistance against a regime or societal issue, food activism is more often understood through the lens of food sovereignty, which emphasises the need for all people, as citizens and consumers, to take an active stance on how food is produced, distributed and consumed across different sectors in society.

Nevertheless, there is another facet of food activism. With understanding the origins of food and the processes that lead to it, also comes the recognition that food represents the most intimate relationship that human communities establish with other living things, human and non-human. Hence, engaging in food activism is not only a means to secure the availability and fair distribution of food for human communities, but it means addressing the fundamental relationship between humanity and nature; whereby participation is not only a civic duty but is imbued with cultural and spiritual dimensions, connecting oneself with the natural world.

⁹ Pimbert, M. (2019). Food Sovereignty. In P. Ferranti, E. Berry, & A. Jock (Eds.), *Encyclopaedia of Food Security and Sustainability* (1 ed., Vol. 3, pp. 181-189). Elsevier.

¹⁰ Cassidy, C. and Christie, D. (2014). Community of Philosophical Inquiry: Citizenship in Scottish Classrooms. *Childhood & Philosophy*, Rio de Janeiro, 10(19), jan-jun. 2014, p. 33-54.

¹¹ Colucci-Gray, L., & Camino, E. (2014). From knowledge to action? Re-embedding science learning within the Planet’s web. In S. Alsop, & L. Bencze (Eds.), *Activist Science and Technology Education* (Cultural Studies of Science Education). Springer-Verlag.

¹² Counihan, C. and Siniscalchi, V. (2014). *Food Activism: Agency, Democracy and Economy*. London: Bloomsbury.

¹³ Block, D., Chavez, L., Allen, E., Ramirez, D. (2012). Food sovereignty, urban food access, and food activism: Contemplating the connections through examples from Chicago. *Agric Hum Values*, 29, pp. 203–215

On this basis, five key dimensions of food activism were identified and explored with participants during the course of the project:

Food quality: gaining first-hand knowledge of the processes of food growing and storage, raising awareness of nutritional qualities of different types of food, but also recognising that freshness and quality of food depend upon water, energy and healthy soils.

Food production/disposal: gaining understanding of the entire process of food production – from soil to fork – to identify how resources are being used and distributed across different food systems.

Food equity: deepening awareness of differential access to food but also differential access to resources for food production. Food equity problematizes land use and points to the need to democratise food cultures and food practices.

Food sovereignty: highlights the inextricable link between place, taste and food. Food sovereignty values local knowledge and the cultural heritage of people and places, but it also highlights how power divisions (between gender, race and class) are produced and re-produced within food systems.

Food sustainability: promotes awareness of the interdependences between environmental, social and ethical dimensions of food systems; it is grounded in participatory approaches to decision-making around food choices that impact individuals and communities at the local and global levels.

3. The policy landscape

A number of initiatives in Scottish policy acknowledge the importance of embedding issues of sustainability across all sectors of society. Scotland's [National Performance Framework](#) aims to support inclusive and sustainable growth; it recognises the urgency to reduce inequalities, and to balance economic with social and environmental priorities. Within this broader umbrella, food is identified as a key target for creating new employment opportunities for young people in the expanding [Scottish Food and Drink Industry](#) and the newly introduced [Green Jobs Fund](#). However, food is also linked to community wellbeing, with food poverty being one of the Government's targets for addressing social and educational exclusion (<https://www.gov.scot/policies/poverty-and-social-justice/fair-food-fund/>).

The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 aims to increase participation in local democracy and develop confidence and skills among local people, by giving new rights to local communities to buy land (Part 4) or to lease land from local authorities to grow food, including in hospitals and schools (Part 9). Similarly, [the Sustainable Food Places](#), which started from the three largest cities in Scotland (Glasgow, Edinburgh and Aberdeen) - bring together different representatives from the local community, academics and civil servants to support access to fresh, healthy and affordable food for all ([Our charter – Good Food For All](#)). Notably however, there is no representation of children and young people on the networks.

Turning to education, a number of policies such as *Closing the Attainment Gap*, *A STEM Strategy for Scotland* and *Developing the Young Workforce*, have come into play in recent years to address different economic and educational inequalities; from widening access to the school curriculum to creating pathways for employment, bridging the school curriculum with the priorities of business and industry. The recent [“Food for Thought Programme”](#) published by Education Scotland, awards funding to schools to run food-related projects and it covers a wide range of resources linking together topics such as food with health and wellbeing and employability. Seeking to integrate and reconcile economic drivers with social and environmental goals, the [Vision 2030+ Report and Action Plan](#) explicitly addresses the relationship between education and sustainability. Drawing on the recommendations of the One Planet School Report, the Scottish vision of Learning for Sustainability weaves together global citizenship, education for sustainable development, and outdoor learning with the aim of creating coherent, whole school approaches that foster the ability to care and to act¹⁴.

4. Aims of the project

This project was set out to involve stakeholders from different sectors in Scotland to discuss the relevance of food as a central dimension of Learning for Sustainability, and to develop a framework to inform curriculum planning by practitioners in schools. In order to achieve this aim, the project sought to:

¹⁴ Christie, B., Higgins, P., King, B., Collacott, M., Kirk, K., and Smith, H., (2019) From rhetoric to reality: Examining the policy vision and the professional process of enacting Learning for Sustainability in Scottish schools. *Scottish Educational Review* 51(1).

- Raise awareness of the ecological, cultural, economic and social dimensions of food as a global sustainability issue, and the role of young people as responsible producers and consumers.
- Engage children and young people in philosophical inquiry to identify and extend opportunities for teaching, learning and assessment about healthy food and sustainability in school gardens.
- Develop a framework for integrating food and food activism across the curriculum, promote opportunities for school-community collaboration and identify areas of research informing policy and practice.

5. Methodology

The project team was constituted by members from different academic disciplines (e.g. education, science, inclusion, philosophy of education) working in Higher Education and teacher education specifically, as well as in the third and voluntary sectors. The diversity within the team was designed to enable a variety of perspectives to be included throughout the planning stages, during the events, and in the debriefing and analysis stages that followed.

Participants at the events were invited by the team members to provide wide representation across sectors. Some of the participants were prompted to attend by other participants, and some signed up having seen the events advertised on social media or Eventbrite. The goal was to create a sufficiently diverse group that included people who would have relevant experience to share with others on the topic of food, activism and Learning for Sustainability.

Over the course of the project, the team successfully engaged with teachers, student teachers, academics, community educators, local policy makers, charities and non-governmental organisations who were interested in collaborating to create a framework for action relating to sustainability and food. The team also worked to involve children and young people in the project and drew on previous projects involving primary school children led by some of the team members¹⁵.

¹⁵ Gray, D., Colucci-Gray, L., Donald, R., Kyriacou, A. and Wodah, D. (2019). From oil to soil. Learning for sustainability and transitions within the school garden: a project of cultural and social re-learning. *Scottish Educational Review*, 52(1), pp. 57-71.

6. Workshop events

Three events were held to provide opportunities for those representing different sectors and organisations across Scotland to come together to exchange perspectives and experiences relating to food sustainability, with a view to constructing a shared framework to support a food activist stance.

The first event, held in Glasgow in February 2019, was designed to explore with participants the relevance of the topic of food to broader issues of sustainability and the opportunities - in Scotland - for talking about food activism in schools.

The second event was developed to involve young people in primary and secondary education to share their experiences of food and food activism in school, and to glean a sense of their knowledge and experiences in relation to food. Due to the implementation of the COVID-related lockdown measures over the spring and summer term of 2019-2020, the event with the secondary school was cancelled.

In compliance with COVID-19 restrictions, the third event was held on-line. The event involved participants in discussion about the draft Learning for Sustainability Framework that was devised as a result of the project. It was anticipated that this would support inter-agency and interdisciplinary practices in relation to Learning for Sustainability generally, and a food activist stance in education more specifically.

6.1 Dialogues

All three events were structured as dialogical moments, whereby participants were invited to engage in open discussions and structured workshop activities in order to elicit a range of different perspectives.

The first and third events were attended by a graphic facilitator (Graham Ogilvie) who listened to the discussions and provided a series of visual representations which captured the range of views presented in an accessible format.

At the second event, children's perspectives were elicited through practical Philosophy with Children. Philosophy with Children is an approach to collaborative dialogue that is structured

in such a way that participants engage with ideas philosophically¹⁶. The structure ensures that connections are made across the ideas presented and that ideas are explored together, highlighting where there is agreement and disagreement, and where reasons for agreement/disagreement are provided.

The visual representations produced by the artist were used by the team to reflect on the conversations as they unfolded over the course of the events and they were analysed in order to capture key, recurring themes. Some of the visual representations produced during the events were then selected by the team for inclusion in this report to capture some of the key, recurrent themes.

In addition, during each event, team members took notes and participants' contributions were recorded on post-its, jotted notes, or flipcharts. For the event held in Aberdeen, the children's philosophical dialogues were audio-recorded, transcribed and analysed.

A short evaluation questionnaire was sent to participants after Workshops 1 and 3 to collate further feedback and views on the topics discussed, with a particular focus on the research, policy and practice implications for their own particular role.

At the Aberdeen event, a plenary was held to gather any further questions, impressions and observations from the children who participated.

7. Workshop one. What do we understand by 'Food Activism'?

Speakers: Sarah-Jane Conrad (Bern University of Teacher Education, Switzerland); Irina Martin (Nourish Scotland); Stephen Day (University of the West of Scotland); Ramsey Affifi (University of Edinburgh); Kirsten Leask (Learning for Sustainability Scotland); Donald Gray (University of Aberdeen); Bob Donald (One Seed Forward); Laura Nisbet (City of Edinburgh Council). Graphic facilitator: Graham Ogilvie.

Workshop 1 took place at the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow. In the morning, the keynote speaker - Dr. Sarah-Jane Conrad - provided an overview of the ecological, social and economic impacts of global food production, from the depletion of the Earth's resources to rising inequalities in access to quality food. The presentations that followed illustrated how food inequalities impact on the wellbeing of local communities but also the power of food to bring

¹⁶ Cassidy, C. (2017). Philosophy with Children: a rights-based approach to deliberative participation. *International Journal of Children's Rights* 25(2), 320-334.

together communities (Martin), which led to the question about the potential to foster a food activist stance in young people's education (Day). This was the starting point for examining the opportunities offered by the educational policy framework in Scotland (Leask) to implement cross-curricular, holistic learning, by connecting head, hand and heart¹⁷, around the topic of food. Participants listened to experiences of food growing in Laos (Affifi) as well as locally, as exemplified by the Aberdeen School Garden Project, an initiative which grew from the partnership between University academics and the voluntary organisation One Seed Forward (Gray and Donald). Figure 1 produced by the graphic facilitator attending the event captures some of the key ideas from the morning presentations. In the afternoon, participants designed a school garden and discussed its potential for involving pupils, by incorporating principles from the *Framework for Participation*¹⁸.

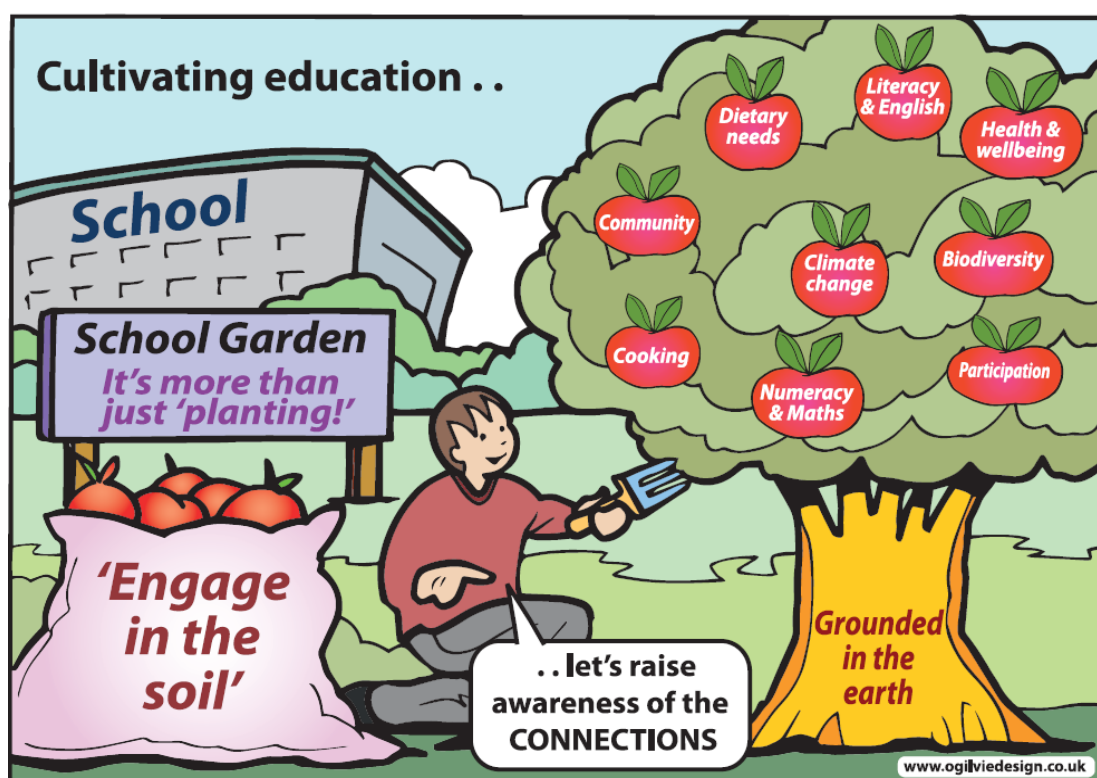


Figure 1. Key messages from workshop 1 presentations. Making connections of head, hand and heart through the soil.

17 Mahmud, S. (2017). Engaging head, heart and hands: Holistic learning approach for education for sustainable development. *International Journal of Learning and Teaching*, 9(2), 298–304.

18 Kristine Black-Hawkins (2010) The Framework for Participation: a research tool for exploring the relationship between achievement and inclusion in schools, *International Journal of Research & Method in Education*, 33:1, 21-40, DOI: [10.1080/17437271003597907](https://doi.org/10.1080/17437271003597907)

School teachers in attendance had some experience of working with children and young people in school gardens. From their perspectives, the experience of growing food with children and young people, and learning alongside them about the processes of tending plants had been valuable. Teachers thought that it enabled children and young people to be involved and made them feel responsible for their own actions. However, participants also noted the need for greater involvement of other groups in the school as well as local community groups, to support the maintenance of the garden and the harvest, distribution and cooking of the garden produce. Hence, responsibility for the gardens should be shared across the school and the community (Figure 2).

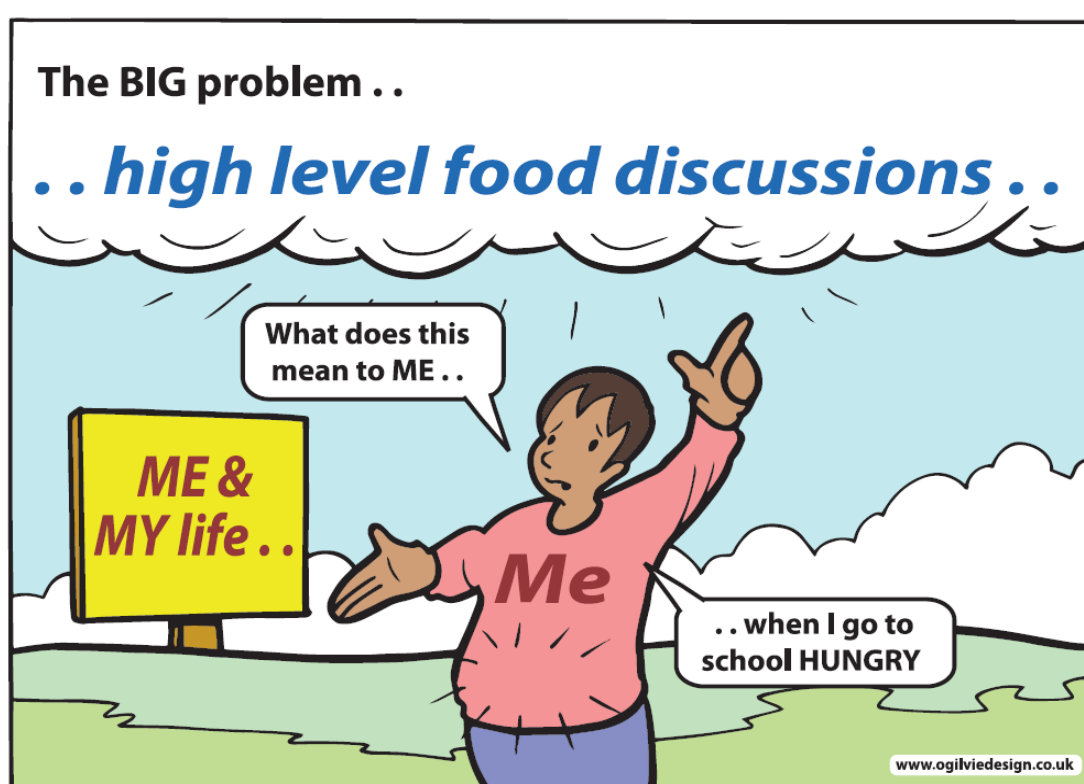


Figure 2. Challenges to food activism in schools.

Participants also noted opportunities for linking gardening experiences with other opportunities for learning outdoors and other areas of the curriculum, such as inclusion, as well as climate and biodiversity. The interdisciplinary nature of the topic of food raised questions about staff expertise, particularly for primary school colleagues, and the importance of working together with different people in order to share knowledge from different disciplinary areas and different sectors. Initial teacher education was identified as an important area where such integration and cross-sector collaboration could take place. This was of particular importance given the

[recent report](#) from Quality Assurance Agency that recognises the importance of Sustainability Education in Higher Education, but also the inclusion of Learning for Sustainability in the General Teaching Council for Scotland Professional Standards.

Finally, questions arose about curriculum priorities. Teachers perceived constraints about spending time in the garden when they are faced with the requirement to deliver specific curricular outcomes. Cross-subject collaboration across STEM subjects, for example, was signalled as a potential area for bringing together subject specialisms with deeper understanding of the ecological and ethical dimensions involved in food activism.

7.1 Key messages from the first event

It was clear from the discussions that the concept of food activism was new to some participants. There was no sense that food activism would or should equate to the simple action of children and young people taking to the streets, in the manner of recent protests for climate change. In addition, participants were clear that the scale of the issues affecting the environment and society exceeded the resources, realm of influence and responsibility of children and young people. Instead, educating children about the origins of food - both conceptually and practically - and raising awareness about the diversity of experiences that each one of them may have in relation to production and consumption of food, could potentially foster an activist stance. In sum:

1. Food education is not the responsibility of specialist teachers but is connected to all areas of the curriculum, and it brings together learning of concepts with direct experience of growing and preparing food.
2. An activist stance arises from a clear, shared purpose. It requires working more closely with other colleagues and groups outside the school, and it calls for a more strongly defined ethical stance permeating the teaching of food in schools.

8. Workshop two. From soil to fork: different facets of food activism.

Workshop two took place at the University of Aberdeen with a Primary six class (aged 10-11). The children were split into groups to participate in three activities. All children participated in each activity. The workshop began with a Philosophy with Children session. The children read the story *Tidy* by Emily Gravett. The story was used to stimulate the children's questions. In engaging with the questions, the children followed a structure where they made connections between the ideas they shared with the group by agreeing or disagreeing with what they'd heard and by offering reasons for

those agreements or disagreements. The dialogue surfaced some assumptions the children made in relation to the topics and highlighted, not only the connections the children made, but where there was a lack of understanding of particular concepts. It also revealed how children understood Learning for Sustainability and Food Activism.

The children created posters prompted by the philosophical inquiry. The posters offered them the opportunity to highlight an area of focus from the dialogues in which they were particularly interested. The posters were taken back to the children's school for completion and would then be returned to the project team. Covid-19 restrictions came into force at the end of that week and schools closed; therefore, the children were not able to share these.

The third activity in this workshop was a baking session. The children worked in small groups to bake breakfast muffins. The muffins used locally sourced produce, such as the flour and grated carrots but could also include favourite non-local ingredients, such as blueberries and bananas, which offered opportunities for discussion with team members. During the baking activity, the children also spoke about their knowledge of food and the ways in which they engaged with food outwith school, for example, as a shared experience with grandparents or in growing vegetables.

8.1 Key messages

There was no sense that the children were keen to be activists in relation to food. It is important that children do not have a sense that they should be obligated to be activists, but that they know this route is open to them and that they can be supported in this, should they so choose. General food education, on the other hand, may be a more important focus in moving forward, potentially offering a different route into activism which is connected to their own everyday lives (Figure 3).

1. Children need to have greater opportunities to engage in open dialogue about Learning for Sustainability.
2. Children need to be supported in developing their general knowledge in relation to food and associated global issues;
3. Children do not necessarily recognise food education as important as other aspects of the curriculum.
4. Children do not necessarily see themselves as having a role in making decisions about food;

5. Children need to be supported to see how food education, and gardening activities, are not discrete events;
6. Engaging children in food-related activities provides the opportunity to engage with the origins and characteristics of food items, extending knowledge and experience they may bring from home.

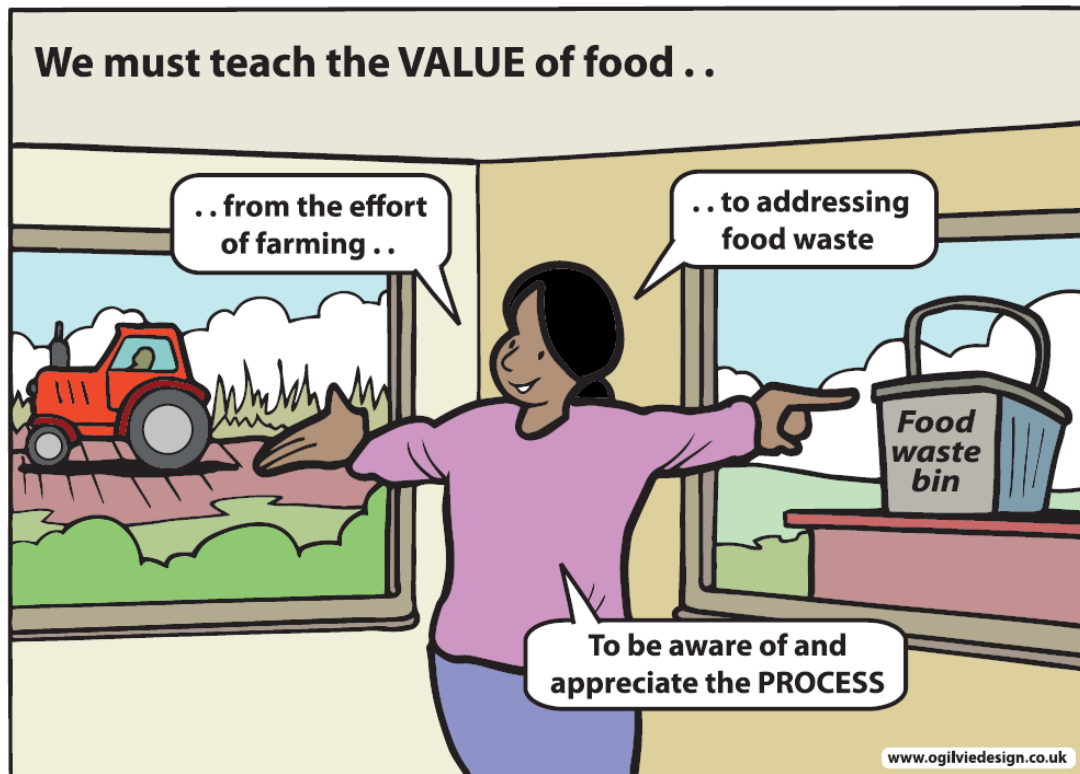


Figure 3. Activism as/in everyday practices.

9. Workshop 3. Next steps for food activism in Scotland.

Speakers: Pallavi Varma Patil (Azim Premji University, India); Roshni Ravi (Nature Conservation Foundation's Education and Public Engagement Programme, India); Laura Colucci-Gray (University of Edinburgh), Claire Cassidy (University of Strathclyde), Stephen Day (University of the West of Scotland), Kirsten Darling-McQuistan (University of Aberdeen).

At the final event, the two international keynote speakers, Pallavi Varma Patil and Roshni Ravi, drew on their work in India to illustrate how the concept of food activism can inform a whole school-community collaboration involving children, parents, grandparents and teachers in growing, harvesting and processing food. The speakers also shared practical examples to show how this approach enabled local communities to research together, find ways to achieve greater

cohesion and respond to the impacts of poverty and climate change (Figure 4). Participants felt inspired by the presentations and the range of real-life examples of practice in schools.

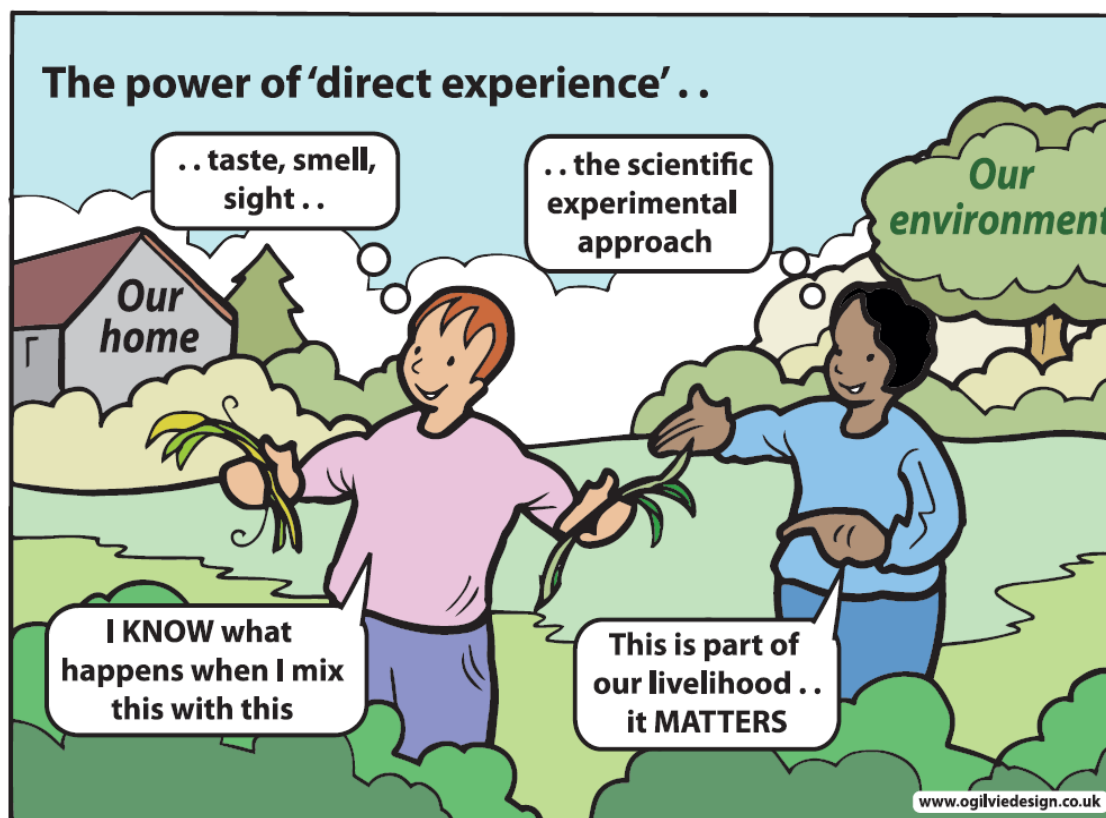


Figure 4. Food activism as collective, community-based inquiry.

In this Workshop, the team also shared a draft version of the Learning for Sustainability Framework (see Section 10). The general impression from across participants was that the Framework was useful as a basis to spark conversations on the topic of Learning for Sustainability broadly, and food more specifically, particularly in terms of including the political dimensions of the topic. Participants also thought the use of questions in the Framework allowed for an enabling format that is exploratory and open, moving away from more prescriptive/descriptive tones. In terms of the Food Activism Framework, the theme of food sovereignty and issues relating to waste and rising prices of fresh food resonated strongly with participants' personal experiences. Some noted how the concept of waste is not only an environmental problem but also a significant moral and ethical issue, and for this reason, a wider discussion and further exploration with young people in the class felt necessary.

Some participants spoke about schools being keen to make connections with external organisations and bringing the community into contact with the school community to collaborate and learn from one another and to share expertise. Some participants mention that the Glasgow Community Food Network is connecting with schools and there is a push for an urban farm where it is hoped that school groups will visit. Potential links with STEM and opportunities to foster better mental health and well-being through gardening/food growing activities were also identified. The value of experiential learning was noted and the potential for outdoor learning to extend young peoples' inquiry into food systems beyond the schoolyard to include community food outlets, allotments, private gardens and supermarkets.

In terms of potential challenges, participants highlighted the need to ground the use of the Frameworks in real-life examples/actual situations, for which practitioners may need some additional resources and guidance. One of the groups specifically raised the question of how to make sure the topic of food is addressed in a culturally-sensitive and non-judgemental way, as it is a topic that lends itself to potential stigma and/or stereotyping. For example, depending on social, economic and cultural backgrounds, what counts as 'normal' or 'healthy' for some families may be different for others. This point is also applicable to teachers and student teachers themselves who may not have had the chance to consider their own food choices from multiple, historical, cultural, ecological and economic perspectives.

Further challenges were identified around buy-in from school leadership teams to ensure continuity of staff involvement and appropriate staff training (for example, for setting up and maintaining a school garden). In order for food activism to become core to the work of schools, participants felt it needed to be closely aligned with School Improvement Plans and Self-evaluation frameworks (e.g. [*How Good Is Our School*](#)). Uptake of the Frameworks in schools could also provide leverage for introducing food activism as part of teacher education programmes, with the opportunity for student teachers to try out the Learning for Sustainability and Food Activism Frameworks as part of their placement experiences.

At the end of the workshop, participants in all groups pointed to the need for a change of culture, not only in schools and teacher education, but in wider society. There is potential to introduce food activism in education systems to connect and empower communities (Fig. 5).

10. The Learning for Sustainability Framework

The initial intention was that a Framework for Food Activism would be created as a result of the various project activities. It was acknowledged that Food Activism sits within the broader field of Learning for Sustainability. From discussions with participants, in reviewing the data collected from the workshops and through team meetings, it became apparent that practitioners also required support in ensuring breadth in Learning for Sustainability. In this context, breadth meant not only the range of topics that sit under the umbrella of Learning for Sustainability, but that practitioners are supported to consider the approaches to teaching and learning they adopt and the place of young people in taking the learning and the sustainability agenda forward.

Drawing on the images created by the graphic facilitator in the first workshop, the experiences of working with the children in the second workshop, and considering the analysis of the images, workshop discussions and philosophical inquiry, a Framework for Learning for Sustainability was produced. The Framework has been designed to support practitioners in their planning of Learning for Sustainability and can be used across early years, primary, secondary, Further Education and Higher Education sectors.

Three principles were identified as central to Learning for Sustainability: social justice, inquiry and learning (Figure 6). Each principle has a series of elements to help focus practitioners' attention on the range of issues they should consider in planning for Learning for Sustainability. For example, the elements within the principle of social justice include: power, rights, equality, inclusion, ethics, reciprocity, responsibility, and attitudes. To support practitioners further, under each element, three questions have been provided to provoke their thinking, planning and teaching. For instance, evidence sits under the principle of inquiry. Three questions are provided for this element: Do I ensure that I use resources that are credible? How do I evaluate evidence and support young people to do this? How do I want young people to be able to use evidence?

The Framework is designed to be used by individual practitioners, but also across young peoples' study careers, for example, throughout their time in primary school or across a degree programme. It is hoped that this will ensure balance. Recognising that the elements complement one another, practitioners can work across the Framework and use the question prompts from the various elements to support their planning. The practitioner may, for

example, ask: ‘How do I ensure opportunities for participation?’ (openness) while also asking ‘How do I ensure young people can participate if they wish?’ (rights); ‘How do I ensure that I’m not dominating the dialogue?’ (dialogue); ‘How do I involve younger/older members of the community in the learning activities?’ (intergenerational); and so on.

To access the Learning for Sustainability Framework: [click here](#).

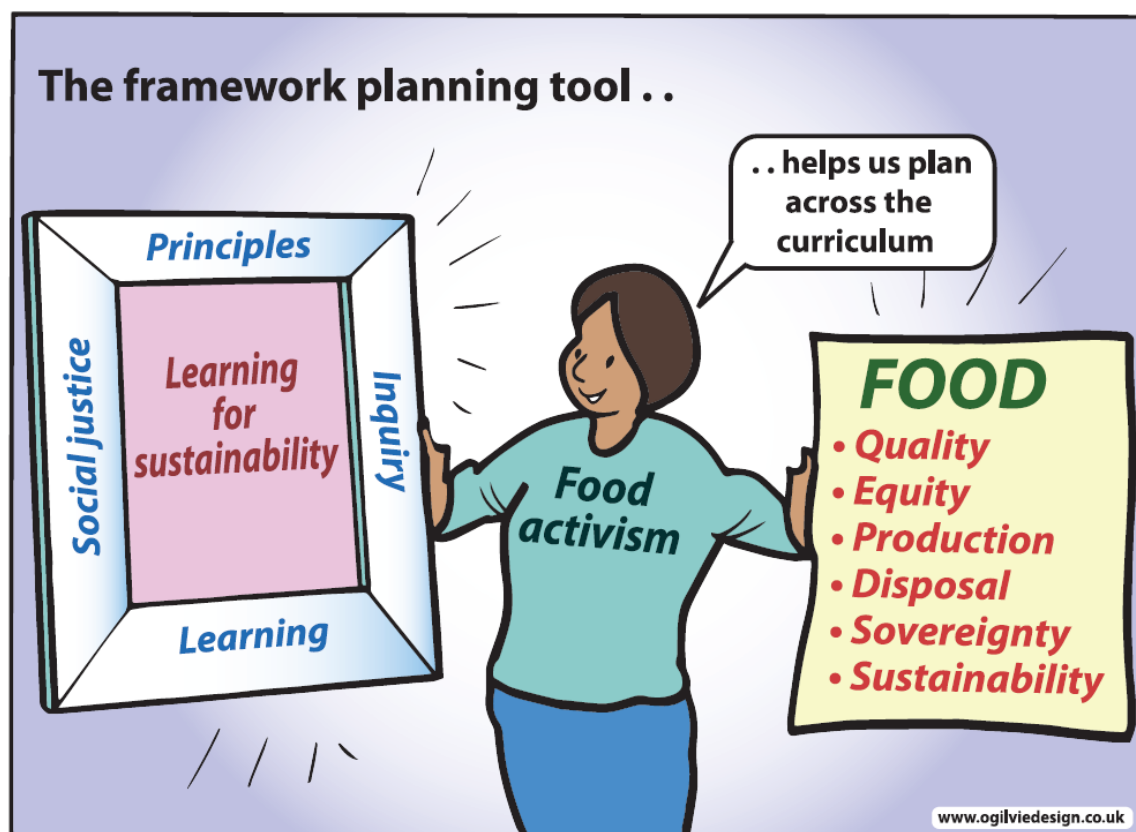


Figure 6. The Learning for Sustainability framework for planning across the curriculum.

11. The Framework for Food Activism

Taking into account the experiences and views shared by participants at the events, and incorporating the three principles from the Learning for Sustainability Framework, a Food Activism Framework was developed with the aim of providing guidance for curriculum planning across the different dimensions of food and sustainability. The Framework includes both a vertical and horizontal dimension; together they enable the practitioner to consider specific aspects of the topic of food production and consumption. It also supports them to see progression across different levels of the curriculum, from early years to the senior phase.

Each section of the Framework, however, is not value-neutral. Drawing on the three principles from the Learning for Sustainability Framework - social justice, inquiry and learning - the

different sections of the Framework encourage practitioners to draw upon different disciplines in order to elicit diverse learning experiences and perspectives related to the topic of food. For example, the importance of eating fresh food and vegetables, a common topic that might be addressed in nursery as well as at Higher levels in biology or home economics, can raise further questions about the origins and provenance of that fresh food (e.g. are potatoes intensively farmed? Were pesticides used?). Similarly, dietary choices such as eating a piece of fresh meat or a fresh avocado may be debated from different perspectives, to take account of the complex interplay of environmental, social, cultural and economic factors.

In more detail, when planning a teaching sequence, the first section on the vertical axis - food quality - is closely related to the components and characteristics of foods (for example, freshness, nutritional qualities, processing and preservation, etc.). The Framework progressively introduces a system perspective by considering: differential access and distribution; the inputs and outputs of materials and energy involved in the production and consumption of food; the roles of different stakeholders in making decisions on the use and ownership of resources, as well as contributing to food cultures (food sovereignty). Finally, the last section (food sustainability) points to the actions that different stakeholders can take together to generate understanding of the value of food as a social, ethical and ecological issue.

On the horizontal axis, the Framework encourages practitioners to plan for food activism across all educational levels. Thinking about food as a central dimension in the lives of all members of a community, translates into a form of collaborative planning which may involve the incorporation of the topic of food - from growing to disposal - throughout young peoples' entire educational career. It might prompt a head teacher to undertake a whole-school approach to collaborative planning and inquiry, or it can also be a means to support peer learning across levels: for example, through transition from primary to secondary school; and from the broad and general phase of the curriculum to the senior phase. Like the Learning for Sustainability Framework, the Food Activism Framework is designed to be flexible, to be accessible to practitioners and to work in a way that suits their needs and the needs of the young people they teach (Figure 7).

To access the Food Activism Framework: [click here](#).



Figure 7. Food activism to support ‘making connections’ between curriculum, experience and action.

12. Recommendations

1. Learning about food/food activism cannot be abstracted from Learning for Sustainability more broadly.
2. Learning about food/food activism is integral to children and young people’s lives; as such, it cannot be a set of singular experiences but needs to be embedded across the curriculum and integrated throughout the course of children and young people’s education.

3. ITE courses need to embrace LfS. Food activism offers a new form of teacher literacy that addresses current problems and priorities in education and wider society.
4. Opportunities should be sought to promote collaboration between schools and the wider community (including other sectors, inter-generational groups, NGOs, charities, etc.).
5. There should be spaces for children and young people to grow their own food in schools and the community as part of a broad and general education that promotes critical thinking and ethical dispositions.
6. Whole school collaboration can be facilitated through the use of the Learning for Sustainability and Food Activism Frameworks.