

Educating the Heart: A Curriculum Based and Holistic Approach for Cultivating Compassionate Global Citizenship

Organisation: Children in Crossfire

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Key words for the paper

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Introduction

Across Europe, education for Global Citizenship has found a curricular mandate, with an emphasis on the role of education in bringing about socio-political and environmental transformation. At an international level, the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), by the United Nations General Assembly in September 2015, sets the agenda for international development until 2030. The SDGs mark a new global commitment to transform our societies and economies for sustainable development and global justice. In particular SDG 4: target 4.7, aims to 'ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to make the transition to a peaceful and sustainable global community' (UN General Assembly, 2015, p17), thereby calling for transformative educational change all over the world. Moreover, education for global citizenship has gained prominence with the United Nations Secretary-General's Global Education First Initiative (2012). Among the three priority areas outlined in this global initiative, the third calls for a priority focus on 'fostering global citizenship'. In its call, it states that the world faces global challenges, which require global solutions. These interconnected global challenges call for far-reaching changes in how we think and act for the dignity of fellow human beings:

'It is not enough for education to produce individuals who can read, write and count. Education must be transformative and bring shared values to life. It must cultivate an active care for the world and for those with whom we share it. It requires transforming the way people think and act. Education must fully assume its central role in helping people to forge more just, peaceful, tolerant and inclusive societies. It must give people the understanding, skills and values they need to cooperate in resolving the interconnected challenges of the 21st century' (Global Education First Initiative, 2012).

SDG 4.7 and the Global Education First Initiative seem to premise education for global citizenship upon the principle of universality, where beyond the notion of being members of Nation-States, individuals are interconnected to other human beings across the world. In an increasingly interdependent globalised world, such an education might be considered essential. Indeed, 'advocates of education for global citizenship place importance on humanisation and its potential for a unifying identity (Appiah, 2006). Nussbaum (1996) suggests that global citizenship education, which emphasises responsibility to humankind and shared values, may be the foundation to transcend inequalities and injustice at global, national and local levels, and thus to build and maintain sustainable peace' (quoted in Reilly and Neins, 2014, p56).

However, how might teachers implement education programmes which foster universal values based on humanisation? What are the required knowledge and skills for building a peaceful and sustainable global community? How can teachers transform the way students think and act? How can they cultivate an active care for the world amongst students?

This paper addresses the above questions through presenting a theoretical grounding alongside a practical curriculum based model which strives to respond to the call within the Global Education First Initiative and SDG 4.7.

Although it is beyond the confines of this paper to present evidence based findings, it is important to note that the model, which is termed 'Educating the Heart' has emerged from a series of pilot studies and consultations conducted by Children in Crossfire¹ between 2015-2017 including:

- A Student Pilot Study conducted during 2015 as an eight-week intervention amongst 28 students aged 11-12 from Oakgrove Integrated College in Derry
- A Pilot Study conducted during 2017-2018 with 72 primary and post-primary teachers across the island of Ireland
- A Think Tank (2017) involving thirty national and international scholars, researchers, educators, and curriculum and policy makers.

Overall, 'Educating the Heart' offers a holistic approach to education for global citizenship. It is rooted in 'compassion ethics' and merges aspects of 'social and emotional learning (SEL)' with 'critical pedagogical approaches'. All of these terms will be defined in due course, but for now it is important to note that there has been little exploration of the role of 'compassion ethics' and 'SEL' in education for global citizenship programmes. 'Educating the Heart' is a model which attempts to bridge this gap, and throughout 2019-2021, it will undergo further exploration through practice and research investigation.

The Theory Behind Educating the Heart

Since 2005, Children in Crossfire has been delivering an education for Global Citizenship programme across the island of Ireland. The organisation has built substantial expertise delivering accredited Continuing Professional Development and Initial Teacher Education (ITE) courses for primary and post-primary teachers. Since its inception in 2005, Children in Crossfire's educational approach has been rooted in Development Education (DE). DE seeks to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes required so that people can participate actively in their own development and in the development of local and global communities. It has a strong focus on global interconnectedness, and aims to awaken in people the need to take individual and collective action to bring about a more just and peaceful world. DE envisions a world based on solidarity, equality and sustainability. It empowers people to create this world, through a process of thinking critically and active citizenship.

¹ Founded in 1996 by Richard Moore, Children in Crossfire is an International Non-Government Organisation (INGO) based in Northern Ireland. The organisation has developed a dual approach: firstly, working in Tanzania and Ethiopia to improve healthcare, nutrition and education for young children; and, secondly working in Ireland to help young people gain the skills **and values needed to become compassionate global** citizens and peace-builders.

Critical Pedagogy

Ultimately, DE has roots in critical pedagogy. Critical pedagogy is the label under which much social change education locates itself (Choules, 2007, p160). In fact, the critical pedagogy of Paulo Freire (1973) underpins DE, 'promoting problem-based learning, dialogue and participation within a co-operative learning environment where the teacher engages in learning with the student, and the student engages with other students in addition to learning with the teacher' (quoted in Chaib, 2010, p42). Freire proposes three key aspects for an effective education. These include; dialogue, critical reflection, and action.

1. Dialogue is rooted in critical thinking. 'Through dialogue, teachers should pose problems to their students. Subsequently, students, as they are increasingly faced with problems relating to themselves in the world and with the world, will feel increasingly challenged and obliged to respond to that challenge' (Freire, 1973, p54).
2. Critical reflection operates at a deeper level than critical thinking. It involves an investigation of identity, values and perspectives; alongside an analysis of how these are linked to maintaining socio-political inequalities.
3. Through merging critical reflection and critical thinking, teachers and students are inspired to take an active role in transforming socio-political injustices.

Overall, 'action and reflection, theory and practice come together in what Freire calls praxis, an intersection that allows for the creation of human agency in which students and teachers become active subjects that can transform reality and create change' (Swartz, 1998, p168). For Freire, this praxis is integral to a humanisation process, whereby teachers and students form critical awareness of local and global injustices and seek to transform such injustices in solidarity with humankind.

From Critical Pedagogy to Social and Emotional Learning

Whilst acknowledging the key role of critical pedagogy for underpinning its education for global citizenship programme, in 2015 Children in Crossfire initiated an exploration of the incorporation of social and emotional learning (SEL) in preparing young people for participating in the world as global citizens. 'SEL is the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions' (CASEL, 2013, p4).

Hence, would a pedagogical approach which also seeks to nurture SEL prepare young people more holistically for participating in today's increasingly interconnected world? Is such an approach essential for responding to the call of SDG4.7 and the Global Education First Initiative? Such an approach is also in line with the thinking of Goleman and Senge (2014). In their book, 'The Triple Focus: A New Approach to Education' (2014), the authors point out, that linking SEL and 'larger world' education requires an innovative pedagogical approach. They identify three skill sets: 'focusing on self, tuning in to other people, and understanding the larger world and how systems interact' (quoted in Goleman and Senge, 2014, p1).

Children in Crossfire therefore asked itself if its programme adequately nurtured skills 'on self' and how that self becomes 'tuned to other people'. In fact, commensurate with Giroux (1983), the

organisation asked if, ‘critical pedagogy needs to be underpinned by an emotional engagement and optimism in order for it to be transformative’ (quoted in Reilly and Neins, 2014, p56). Subsequently, Children in Crossfire looked to the work of SEL, with a particular focus on the five sets of competencies (see Figure 1) identified by the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL, 2017).

Figure 1



Each of the above five competencies is defined in the link provided in the reference section (see CASEL, 2017). For now, it is important to note that ‘Educating the Heart’ has resonance with these competencies. This will become apparent in due course throughout this paper.

An Ethic in Compassion

As well as considering aspects of SEL, Children in Crossfire further reflected on the notion of cultivating universal values through its programme. As mentioned earlier, universal values based on humanisation seems to be at the heart of the Global Education First Initiative and SDG4.7. Indeed, through employing a critical pedagogical approach, Children in Crossfire’s humanisation approach was rooted in Freire’s praxis, premised upon realising ‘motivational values’ compatible with Shalom Schwartz’s (1992; 2004) notion of ‘universalism’ (see Richey, *et al*, 2013). Studying values from cultures spanning more than 70 countries, Schwartz found that there are 57 distinct value types present in all human beings. As explained by Richey *et al* (2013), Schwartz organised these value types into 10 overall motivational values, with universalism defined as:

‘Understanding, appreciating, tolerance, and protection for the welfare of all people and for nature. (Broadminded, Wisdom, Social Justice, Equality, a World at Peace, a World of Beauty, Unity with Nature, Protecting the Environment)’ (Richey, *et al*, 2013, p11-12).

However, although Children in Crossfire’s approach was aligned with Freirean philosophy and universalism, the organisation asked itself if it was truly cultivating values from applying a pedagogy based on love and compassion. Indeed, ‘Freire (1996) sees the motivation for transforming the world for the liberation of humankind as based on a belief in humanity and a profound love for the world

and for people. Love and hope are considered the basis for taking courage to act in order to create a new vision of the world which breaks down social barriers of class, gender and ethnicity. As individuals transform the world, they transform themselves within it' (quoted in Gill and Neins, 2016, p22).

But, how might love and hope be taught in the classroom, and furthermore, how might such an approach be utilised for self-transformation and the transformation of wider society?

In this instance, Children in Crossfire looked to the work pioneered by Geshe Lobsang Tenzin Negi at Emory University, located in greater Atlanta USA. Based upon research in Psychology, Education and Neuroscience, in 2005 Geshe Lobsang and his team have developed a practice founded on the concepts of critical pedagogy and SEL. Importantly, however, the work is premised on the transformation of self and wider society through an ethic rooted in compassion. Compassion in this respect, is commensurate with the work of the Dalai Lama, who locates the nurturing of compassion in secular ethics. He has articulated his vision for the term secular ethics in numerous talks and writings, most notably in two books 'Ethics for the New Millennium' (2001) and 'Beyond Religion: Ethics for a Whole World' (2011). In these writings, the Dalai Lama states that basic human values need not be based on what separates us, such as religion or culture, but can be established on the basis of common humanity and our interdependence. A core aspect of humanity is the fact that we all desire happiness and do not want suffering; therefore, questions of how we treat one another become of paramount importance. For this reason, the Dalai Lama makes the argument that compassion should be one of the core values for secular ethics. Through the direct cultivation of compassion, one learns to manage one's own emotions, and relate positively to others, whilst recognising wider injustices which cause people to suffer on a global scale. Hence, impelled by the cultivated compassionate impulse, one is more likely to intervene for justice without giving into despair, anger or burnout (see Dalai Lama, 2011).

Geshe Lobsang's practice, for which he has coined the term 'Cognitively Based Compassion Training' (CBCT), is intended as a practical tool for directly cultivating compassion. CBCT merges meditation techniques with critical dialogue to nurture prosocial emotions and mental states including impartiality, empathy and forgiveness. It is important to stress that CBCT stands in contrast to religious uses of meditation, since it is based on secular reasons and analysis (see Ozawa-de Silva, 2014).

Studies suggest that CBCT creates healthier immune response to psychosocial stress, improves empathic accuracy, increases activation in brain regions associated with empathy, increases hopefulness, and elevates self-reported mood when compared with a control condition, and that it can be taught effectively to elementary school children (Mascaro et al., 2012; Ozawa-de Silva et al., 2011; Reddy et al. 2013).

Following a series of consultations with Geshe Lobsang and his team at Emory University, Children in Crossfire undertook training in CBCT and related SEL approaches. Subsequently, the organisation designed its 'Educating the Heart' programme which incorporated elements of these approaches, with a specific focus on techniques aimed to cultivate emotional regulation, resilience, introspection, self and other compassion, equanimity and engaged compassionate action for global citizenship. Indeed, it can be argued that 'engaged compassionate action' requires great courage, determination, perseverance and inner strength. The techniques that 'Educating the Heart' employed were oriented towards developing these capacities (see Murphy et al., 2014) alongside the critical pedagogical approach described earlier.

As mentioned, the initial 'Educating the Heart' model was tested and refined through a series of pilot studies and consultations conducted between 2015 and 2017. Since 2017, 219 primary school teachers and 61 post-primary teachers have completed the CPD training and are implementing the programme across their practice. Again, it is important to remind the reader that it is beyond the confines of this paper to present findings to date in detail. These will be published through a series of papers in 2019.

Nonetheless, the below sections outline the refined 'Educating the Heart' model through the presentation of the:

- Compassion Compass and Curriculum Framework
- School Award Programme

Educating the Heart Compassion Compass and Curriculum Framework

Educating the Heart aims to facilitate the cultivation of the necessary knowledge, skills, attitudes and values for participating in the world as a compassionate global citizen. The below 'Compassion Compass' outlines the essential components of compassion.

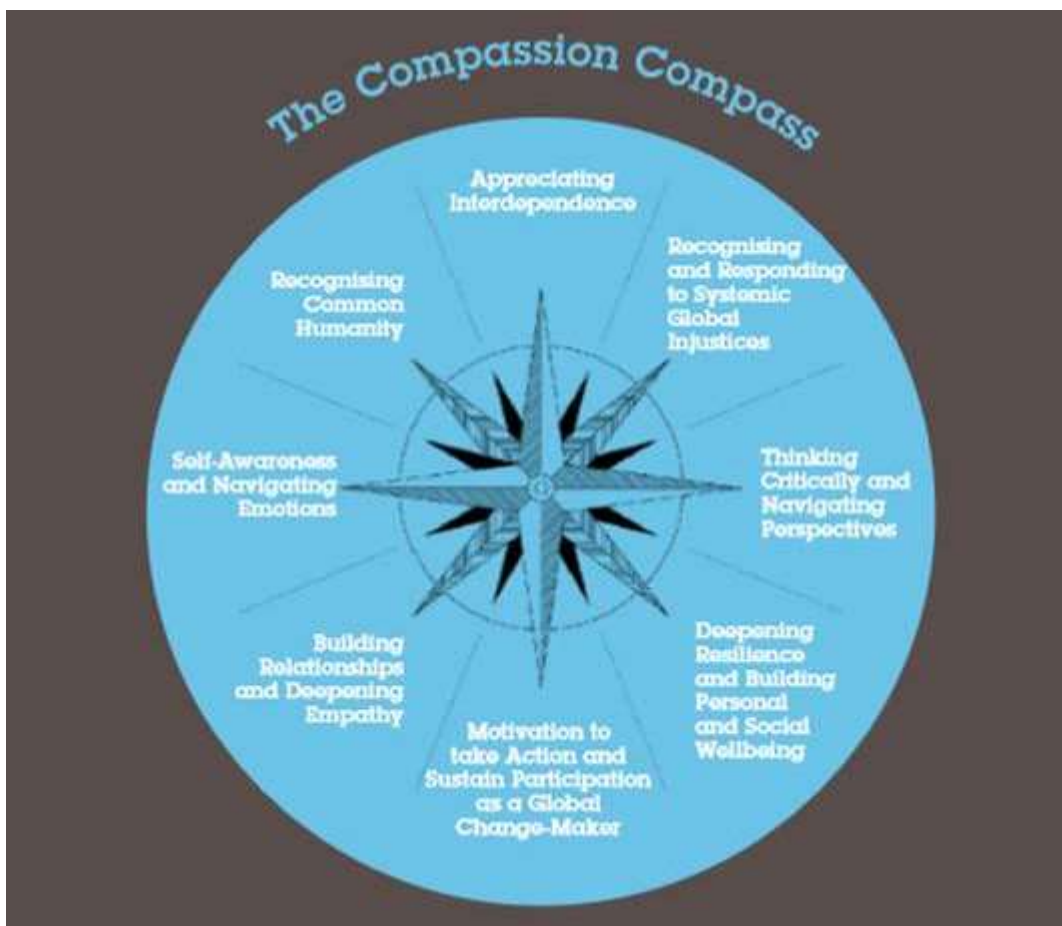


Figure 2

To develop the essential components of compassion and travel through the world as Compassionate Global Citizens, 'Educating the Heart' seeks to develop pupil knowledge and understanding, and skills and values. Pupil voice and Participation is at the core of this programme, and the overall approach seeks to develop the 'whole' pupil through methods which engage the heart, head and body. It is

important to note that Children in Crossfire has a significant focus on providing in depth accredited training² to teachers on appropriate learning strategies rooted in the principles of Critical Pedagogy, Social and Emotional Learning, Pupil Voice and an overarching ethics grounded in compassion. Ultimately, the intention is to ensure teachers have the skills and capacity to facilitate the emergence of a critical consciousness alongside social, emotional and ethical competencies, with all such skills being rooted in compassion. Through this approach, as students are engaged holistically in a learning process, they have the space to reflect, form perspectives, and gain insights into how they might embody compassion as a value and participate in the world as active and compassionate global citizens.

1. Knowledge and Understanding
 - Pupils will develop Knowledge and Understanding through investigating and exploring local and global justice issues
2. Skills and Values
 - Pupils will cultivate the necessary skills and competencies for participating in the world as local and global citizens by acquiring critical thinking, emotional literacy, empathy, wellbeing strategies, metacognition, a growth mindset, universal values, insight, perspective, and reflection
3. Pupil Voice and Participation
 - Pupils will be engaged as compassionate global citizens through participatory and inquiry based learning and through opportunities to engage in action based projects

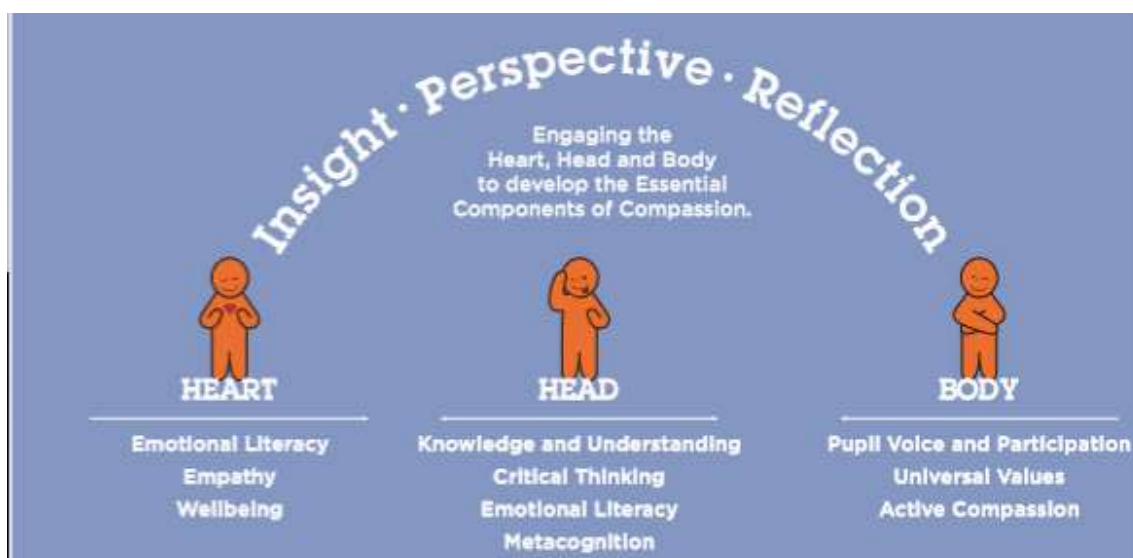


Figure 3

² Educating the Heart is accredited at Level 3 through the Open College Network Northern Ireland (OCN NI). OCN is regulated by the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual) who regulate vocational qualifications in Northern Ireland. OCN is also regulated by the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) Accreditation within Northern Ireland. Level 3 is comparable to working at NVQ level 3, Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) Level 5, A and AS level and Advanced Diploma level.

Through applying the appropriate learning strategies that teachers have developed through the above mentioned training, the below curriculum framework is intended to further support teachers with planning and teaching lessons³ which develop the required knowledge, skills and values to help pupils navigate their way through the various components of compassion.

Pupils will develop Knowledge and Understanding of local and global issues by:	Cultivating Skills and Values - Nurturing Pupil Voice				
	Pupils will cultivate the necessary skills and values for participating in the world as local and global citizens by acquiring:				
	Critical Thinking	Emotional Literacy	Metacognition	A Growth Mindset: attitudes and dispositions	Universal Values
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Investigating the causes and consequences of social injustice, social inequality, global poverty and environmental degradation - Investigating the causes and consequences of conflict - Exploring how the security of the planet depends on global cooperation between nations and people - Exploring how bias, intolerance, and fear of the other can emerge between nations, people and cultures of the world - Exploring cultural understanding - Exploring the interdependent nature of a globalised economy - Investigating the interconnected nature of global political systems - Exploring the role of human rights, children's rights and the abuse of human rights - Examining the role and social responsibility of governments in promoting and safeguarding human rights, global justice and social equality - Exploring the role and social responsibility of Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) in promoting and safeguarding human rights, global justice and social equality - Investigating the role and social responsibility of the media in promoting and safeguarding human rights, social justice and social equality - Exploring aid, trade, debt and global corruption - Exploring the ways young people can actively participate in society and at a local and global level to affect change for the better of all - Investigating ways to promote and develop Pupil Voice on global issues 	<p>Support pupils to think critically about local and global issues by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - asking and working through critical questions about the causes and consequences of local and global inequality - analysing and interpreting relevant issues - assessing key factors and relationships associated with issues - assessing and challenging evidence, and identifying bias and hidden agendas - challenging assumptions and traditional views about issues - considering multiple perspectives on issues - considering issues from various perspectives and asking 'what if' questions - weighing up options when proposing solutions to issues - make reasoned judgements and conclusions about issues - evaluating possible actions 	<p>Support pupils to develop compassion for themselves and others by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - developing a vocabulary and language for emotions, feelings and compassion - developing awareness and understanding into the nature of thoughts, emotions and feelings, and how these can change over time - communicating and expressing emotions and feelings in constructive ways - developing awareness and understanding into the thoughts, feelings and emotions of others - actively listening to and responding appropriately to others - developing awareness and understanding of how they and others feel and respond to certain issues and situations - developing awareness and understanding of how certain events in a person's life can have an effect on their emotional well-being - developing emotional resilience - managing emotions in challenging situations and when exploring pertinent issues - developing empathy and a desire to act to help others 	<p>Support pupils to develop their metacognitive abilities by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - developing understanding of their thinking processes in relation to emotions and feelings - developing the ability to think about what causes their emotional responses and feelings, and those of others - developing the ability to monitor, reflect and evaluate their thinking, emotions and feelings in certain situations, or in response to certain issues - developing the ability to anticipate how they will think and respond emotionally to certain situations and issues - developing thinking strategies to manage emotions and feelings 	<p>Support pupils to develop a growth mindset by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - developing an openness to new ideas - developing skills of resilience - developing self-belief - developing the ability to reflect on personal behaviours and opinions, and challenge these - learning how to think through problems and make decisions - learning how to listen to others and respond appropriately - learning how to critique personal assumptions, beliefs and biases, and how to be impartial in relating to others 	<p>Support pupils to develop universal values by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - developing an appreciation of interdependence - developing an understanding of rights and responsibilities - developing gratitude and appreciation for people across the world - developing an understanding of solidarity and active citizenship

Figure 4

Overall, the 'Educating the Heart' model is intended to be transferrable to any national or international curriculum with a focus on global citizenship education.⁴ Specifically, however, it connects to the Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland's formal education primary and post-primary curricula (see CCEA, 2007; DES, 2015; NCCA, 1999).

³ Educating the Heart provides teachers with a detailed Pupil Programme which includes 12 suggested lesson plans. Each lesson is based on using appropriate learning strategies and participatory methods. Each lesson is structures around two to three 20 to 30-minute activities. Teachers can draw on the curriculum framework to adapt the lessons to suit the needs of their pupils.

⁴ Global Education is understood to encompass Development Education, Human Rights Education, Education for Sustainability, Education for Peace and Conflict Prevention and Intercultural Education; being the global dimensions of Education for Citizenship' (O'Loughlin and Wegimont, 2002, p16).

Educating the Heart Compassionate School Award

As well as supporting teachers to directly implement 'Educating the Heart' through the above mentioned tools, it is intended that the overall ethos of the model will infiltrate across the whole school and beyond. Thus, in collaboration with stakeholders, Children in Crossfire designed an award system to encourage and guide teachers to progress the ethos across the whole school, collaborate with other schools through creating Educating the Heart partnerships, and extend the impact into the wider community. The award system has levels from bronze to gold. In order to achieve the award, schools are required to provide evidence of how they meet the criteria set out in the table below.

Compassionate School Award Levels

Bronze Award	Silver Award	Gold Award
<p>Achieving the Bronze Award means that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">You have attended Children in Crossfire's 'Teachers in Development and Learning' (TIDAL) Educating the Heart CPD CourseYou have successfully completed and received the TIDAL Educating the Heart accredited CPD qualificationYou are putting TIDAL Educating the Heart into practice through the delivery of the Pupil Programme	<p>Achieving the Silver Award means that you already meet the criteria for the Bronze Award, and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">You are promoting TIDAL Educating the Heart to colleagues within your schoolYou are collaborating with colleagues to create subject links through Educating the HeartYou and your colleagues are beginning to see the positive impact of Educating the Heart on pupil learning and wellbeingPupils are taking actions as Compassionate Global CitizensYou and your colleagues are promoting knowledge and understanding of Educating the Heart across the wider school	<p>Achieving the Gold Award means that you already meet the criteria for the bronze and silver awards, and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Educating the Heart is embedded across the ethos and policies of the whole schoolYour school has formed a partnership with another school, and pupils are engaged in shared learningPupils have the opportunity to plan a Compassion in Action event for the school and/or wider community

Welcome to Children in Crossfire's Compassionate School Award

Celebrate your school's Educating the Heart work with Children in Crossfire's Compassionate School Award.

The Compassionate School Award provides a supportive and motivational framework to guide you through the Educating the Heart implementation.

The Compassionate School Award helps your school gain recognition for its progress.

The award has three levels. The level you can apply for will depend on the stage your school is at on its Educating the Heart Journey.

Steps to Your Award

- 1 Decide which award level is best for your school
- 2 Submit your application for your school award at www.childrenincrossfire.org
- 3 Receive your award

Figure 5

Conclusion

In presenting the above Educating the Heart model and theoretical grounding, Children in Crossfire intends to kick-start a process towards bringing about a transformative pedagogy which offers a holistic approach for education for global citizenship. The model will be integrated into upcoming research with teachers and students to help demonstrate the overall impact of the approach. Indeed, at this point, Children in Crossfire cannot make any empirical claims that the model will result in building 'compassionate global citizens'. However, what can be said is that there is a high demand for participation in the programme from pupils, teachers, and other key education stakeholders. In fact, the model has already been extended to initial teacher education (ITE) colleges, with one particular college embedding the programme as a full accredited ITE module.

For now, however, Children in Crossfire presents this model and theoretical grounding as an 'offer' to practitioners and researchers interested in implementing and researching education for global citizenship. It is intended as a means to respond to the call within the Global Education First Initiative and SDG 4.7. It is 'offered' as a pedagogical approach that, at the very least, attempts to merge critical and emotional engagement with an ethics rooted in compassion, as the impetus for socio-political transformation.

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