

HEART 

for the



EARTH

Overview

The UN Climate Change Conference in Glasgow (COP26) and Church of England General Synod (February 2020) stimulated heartfelt discussions upon climate change. Many highlighted the current climate emergency and the factors which had contributed to it, and the subsequent clarion call expressed the urgent need to reduce carbon emissions and live more sustainably. A number of agreements and plans were made with a vision of a more sustainable future, one which sees the flourishing of the planet and all life upon it. It is this vision which is animating much discussion and action, not least amongst children and young people. Climate change is a key moral and spiritual issue of our time.

In responding to this clarion call, the Diocesan Board of Education wishes to support diocesan schools' thinking around climate change and carbon neutral. After a year of planning, we are delighted to introduce Heart for the Earth, a two-year project which includes:

- a suite of termly collective worship resources which explore a biblical rationale for caring for the environment, supporting engagement and reflection on environmental issues;
- a theological rationale for curriculum development, helping schools to theologically reflect and frame their commitment to environmental issues including carbon neutral;
- support for creating an eco-charter which frames a school's commitment to becoming carbon neutral; and
- support for the formation and maintenance of school-based and diocesan environmental groups that promote pupil voice

Underpinning all aspects of the Heart for the Earth resources is the framework of 'heads, hearts and hands'[1]. These three aspects (outlined on the next page), and a clear link between them, are key in encouraging intentional and sustained care for the world in which we live. If one of these is missing, action may become sporadic or tokenistic.

[1] *Jeremy Williams (ed.). Time to Act: A Resource Book by the Christians in Extinction Rebellion (London: SPCK, 2020)*



Heads

Understanding the climate emergency, what has led to it, a view on what should be done for a more sustainable future and why this matters



Hearts

Having a heart for the earth, a desire to see the planet and all upon it flourish



Hands

Making practical and purposeful responses in one's own life and within the communities in which one is a part

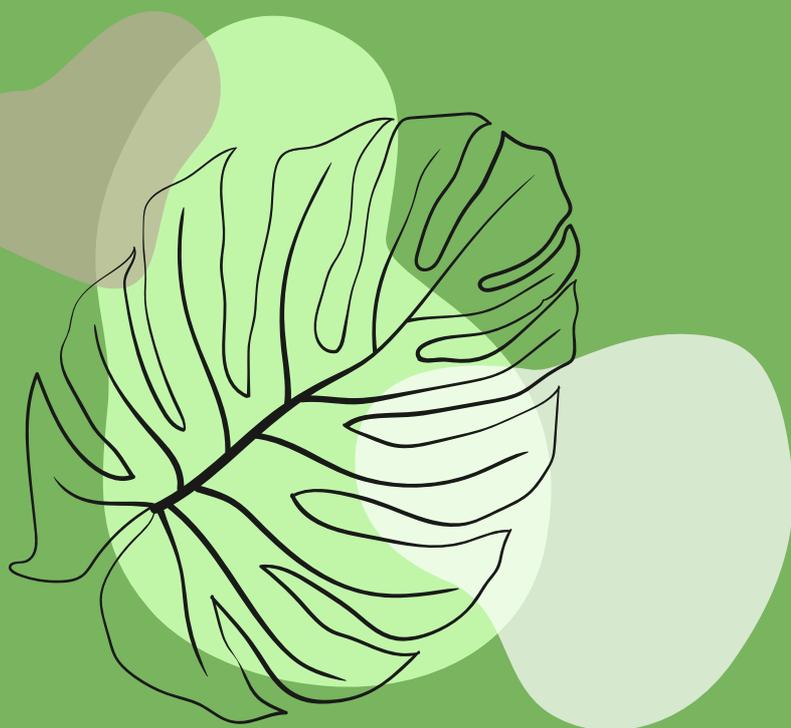
We live at a significant time for the planet, a time rich with opportunities to address, avert and minimise harm to the environment. Whilst some are empowered by this opportunity and view it with hope, others may hold a sense of hopelessness and climate anxiety. This is important to recognise; we must find ways to support and sustain each other through journeys of eco-anxiety. We are mindful of this within the Heart for the Earth resources, and have decided to include positive climate stories and the view that whoever we are, in whatever circumstance, we can each play a valued part in treasuring the earth. This view has informed the theological underpinning (pp.4-5), curriculum rationale (pp.11-15) and the wider resources found on the diocesan website.

However you choose to draw upon these resources, we hope that you and your school communities find them useful in the important work of showing a heart for the earth.

Ryan Parker, Ruth Garman and Hannah Puddefoot
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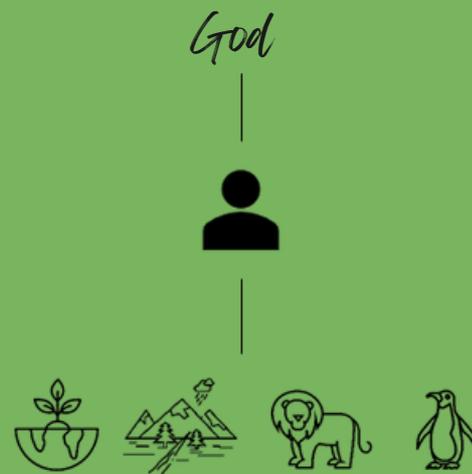
'Know that you are incredibly lucky to be alive at a time when you can make a transformative difference to the future of all life on Earth. You are not powerless. Your every action is suffused with meaning and you are part of the greatest chapter of human achievement in history'

(Christiana Figueres, The Future You Choose (2020))



Theological Underpinning

To enrich Heart for the Earth, we have consulted a range of literature in order to arrive at a clear and meaningful theology to underpin these resources[2]. Although a range of factors have contributed to the current climate emergency, many centre around views of humanity as set above and apart from non-human creation. Too often, this vertical 'dominion' worldview has led to many exploiting the resources of the earth for their own gain. This vertical worldview is shown here



Many Christians are challenging this vertical view. They are increasingly recognising that many parts of the bible (such as Genesis 1, Psalm 104 and Job 38) encourage a better theology which appreciates how humans live as part of a community of creation; all parts of creation have value, are interconnected, and have common dependence on God. This 'horizontal' view (shown to the right) provides an antidote to a human-centred perspective on creation in which humans are perceived to have a special, God-given place within a hierarchy of creation



Within such a horizontal view, there is a greater humility and acknowledgement that treasuring the earth is a form of worship to God; having a heart for the earth is not an 'add on' or optional extra.

[2] In particular: Berry, R.J. (ed.) *Environmental Stewardship: Critical Perspectives – Past and Present* (London: T&T Clark, 2006); Bauckham, R. *Bible and Ecology: Rediscovering the Community of Creation* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 2010), and Marlow, H. *The Earth is the Lord's: A Biblical Response to Environmental Issues* (Cambridge: Grove Books Ltd, 2008)

The analogy of 'earth tourist' versus 'earth pilgrim' is perhaps useful here[3]. An earth tourist 'look[s] at the Earth as a resource of goods and services for our use, pleasure and enjoyment', valuing the natural riches of the planet 'only in terms of usefulness to themselves'. 'Earth pilgrims', on the other hand, 'treat the planet with reverence and gratitude...perceive the planet as sacred and recognise the intrinsic value of all life'. Each of these analogies identify:

- a particular view of the world and one's place within it (head), which
- influences one's relationship to the earth (heart), which
- animates, in its own way, action or inaction (hand)

Although not a perfect analogy, it does raise questions about how we can walk well and 'more lightly on this Earth, with more regard for the other life around us' [4]. In addition, how one views themselves in relationship to the world accords with a frequently used model of spirituality within church schools (see pages 8-9).

Genesis 1



There are a number of creation narratives found in the bible. Perhaps the most well-known narrative – Genesis 1 – has been drawn upon to help shape these resources. The reasons for this are two-fold. First, the 'six-day' narrative provides a meaningful structure and focus for the publication of resources over a two-year period (see page 7). Second, in the absence of a coherent biblical environmental ethic, the narrative is useful for prompting questions and reflections on God and God's creation[5]. It is important to note that there is a wealth of views on the creation narrative of Genesis 1 as to whether this text should be read literally, allegorically, symbolically or otherwise. The Heart for the Earth resources acknowledge a range of interpretations, focussing on how the narrative describes a creator who gives all creation its own and connected role in mutual flourishing. Such a view also prompts reflections on how 'good theology and good science are essential complements, not sparring partners'[6].

[3] <https://www.resurgence.org/magazine/article2837-pilgrims-or-tourists.html>

[4] McKibben, B. *The Comforting Whirlwind: God, Job and the Scale of Creation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1994)

[5] Marlow, H. (2022) 'Creation, humanity and hubris in the Hebrew Bible', *Practical Theology*, pp. 1-13

[6] Berry, R.J. (2006), p. 11

Resource Timeline

Using Genesis 1 as a frame, a total of six termly instalments will be made available across the next two academic years (2022-2024). Each instalment has a particular focus which resonates with the Genesis 1 narrative.



Autumn 22

Electricity



Spring 23

Water



Summer 23

Ecology



Autumn 23

CO₂



Spring 24

Bird and sea life



Summer 24

Animals &
Global citizenship

Each instalment will include:

For **Primary**

- 2 x whole-school/key stage worship plans
- class-based worship ideas
- 1 x singing worship plan

For **Secondary**

- 2 x Key Stage/Year group worship plans
- tutor-based worship ideas

These will be supplemented by ideas:

- for spiritual reflection in reflective areas inside and outside
- to stimulate reflection and practical demonstrations of having a 'Heart for the Earth' at home
- practical ideas for showing a 'Heart for the Earth' across school life

These resources can be used in a variety of ways. Some may choose to use these plans to inform a term's worth of collective worship. Some may choose to use these plans to inform a week's worth of collective worship. Some may split these plans up across the term. Schools are encouraged to draw upon these resources in whichever manner they feel would be most impactful across the school community. Please feel free to adapt and amend these worship plans relevant for context^[7].

For the sixth instalment, two suites of resources will be on offer – one focussing on 'animals' and one on 'global citizenship'. Schools may choose to draw upon one or both.



A seventh instalment will join the sixth one at the end of the *Hearth for the Earth* publications. Just as God rested and 'took stock' in the Genesis 1 narrative, the resources offered for school leaders and community to reflect on their journey together in thinking about climate change and carbon neutral, and what the journey forward might look like.



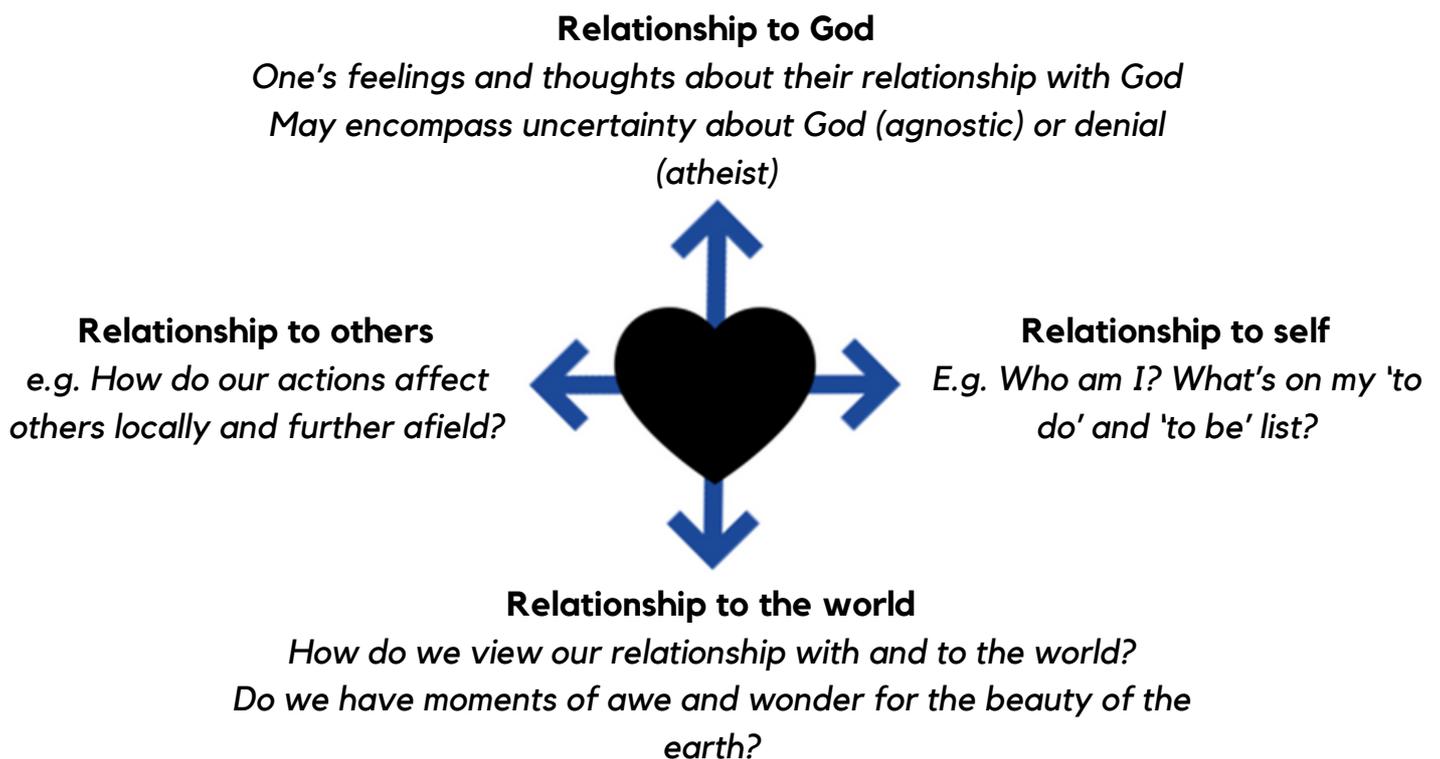
[7] In addition, the *Flourishing Together* podcast episode with Ruth Valerio focuses upon climate advocacy within schools

Collective Worship and Spiritual Development

Collective worship is a powerhouse for spiritual development. In supporting rich reflection on the environment and climate change, the collective worship plans within Heart for the Earth are influenced by two increasingly used models for thinking about spirituality.

1) Rebecca Nye's 'relational consciousness'[8]

At its heart, Nye proposes from her research with children and young people that spirituality links to an awareness of one's relationships – what our relationships are, how they 'add value' to our ordinary and everyday experiences and how they help us make sense of the world and our place within it. These four relationships are displayed below:



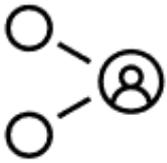
This framework is best understood as interconnected. For instance, one's view of God (and humanity's place within creation (see pages 4-6)) will influence how one feels they should relate to the world, others and themselves.

[8] Hay, D. and Nye, R. *The Spirit of the Child* (London: Jessica Kingsley, 2006)

2) David Csinos' 'spiritual styles'[9]

Csinos' work is important as it brings attention to the fact that each of us has a spirituality as unique as our thumbprint. We all reflect and connect in different ways; what provides a meaningful space or time to worship and/or spiritually reflect may be meaningful for some but less so for others. Some may really value silence to reflect, whilst others find silence difficult. Some love a sense of connection through music and singing collectively, whilst others may prefer to read the words of a hymn and reflect upon them.

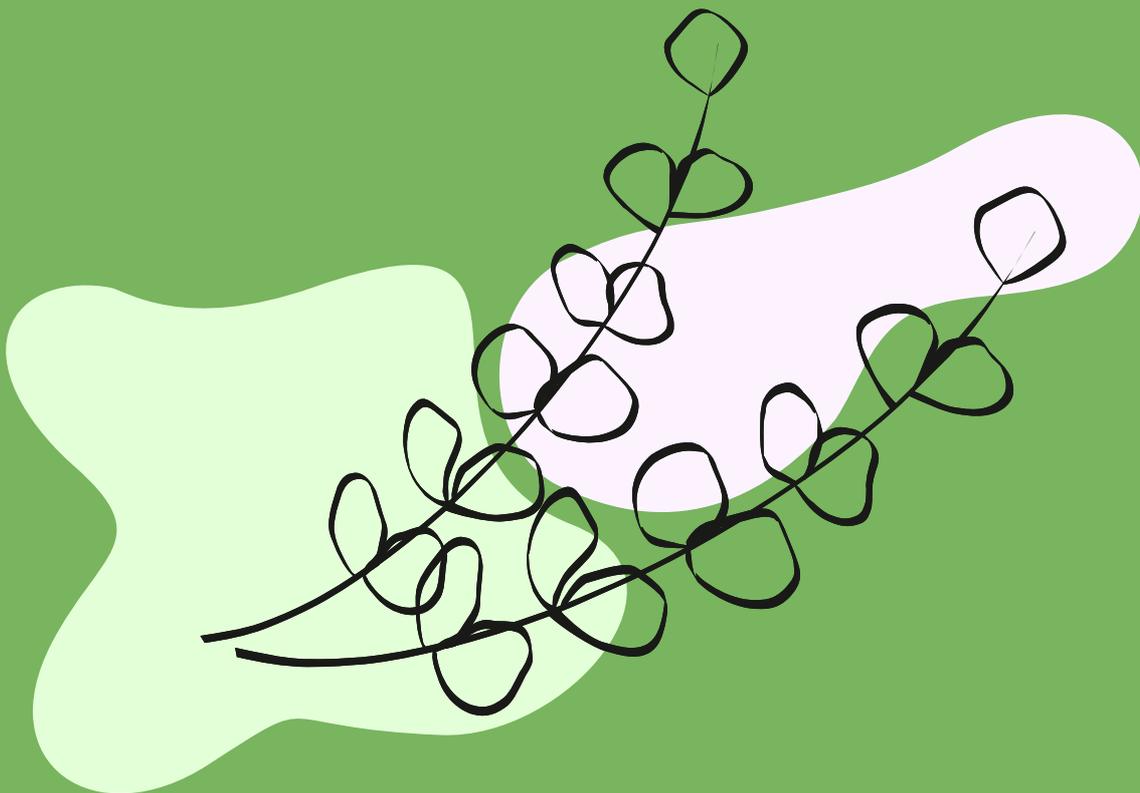
Csinos identifies four main spiritual styles through which people make sense of (and interact with) the world, God, self and others.

	Word	Access their spirituality through from spoken and written words, such as bible stories, prayers, quotes
	Emotion	Access their spirituality through music, drama, art, being with and talking to others
	Symbol	Access their spirituality through silence, being outside, the outside brought in, abstract metaphors, symbolic imagery (e.g. life as a journey)
	Action	Access their spirituality through actions to make a positive difference to the world – it's what one does rather than what one says

[9] Csinos, D. *Children's Ministry that Fits: Beyond-One-Size-Fits-All Approaches to Nurturing Children's Spirituality* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2011)

The collective worship plans within Heart for the Earth are created to invite spiritual reflection upon relationships towards God, the world, others and ourselves in regard to climate change (Nye), whilst also including a variety of approaches in an acknowledgement that different people reflect and connect in different ways (Csinos). Such thinking also underpins ideas for areas of spiritual reflection indoors, outdoors and at home.

Each instalment begins with a worship plan which prompts wonder on the particular area in focus, before going deeper into questions of how we can show a heart for the earth within the other age phase and class/tutor-based plans.



Developing a 'Heart for the Earth' Through the Curriculum

It is a privilege of school leaders to curate a curriculum offer which helps students in their care to flourish[10]. With climate change comprising a significant moral and spiritual issue of our time, many are driven by a moral imperative to consider how we might provide pupils with a comprehensive and robust climate change education. Such a curriculum offer would help pupils understand the science, reality, impact and vocabulary of climate change. But more than this. Climate change education can – and should – 'inspire a feeling of responsibility and hope leading to engagement in action'[11].

A theological rationale for curriculum development

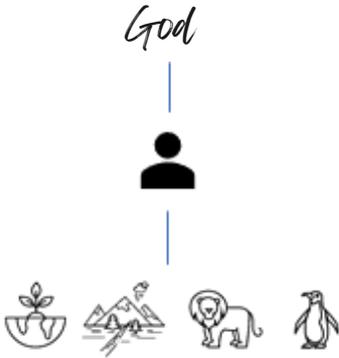
The themes of 'responsibility', 'hope', 'engagement' and 'action' are aspects which are central to a theological rationale for curriculum development. This theological rationale draws upon the 'community of creation' theology as described on pages 3 and 4. Church of England schools draw upon Jesus' words of John 10:10 to enable those in their school community to have 'life in all its fullness'[12]. A 'community of creation' theology emphasises that fullness of life for us and future generations is predicated upon ethical living which takes full account of the interdependency of all aspects of the created order. In short, how we think (head), connect (hearts) and act (hands) towards the earth is vital in ensure the flourishing of all creation, including humanity.

[10] *Two publications in particular have shaped this curriculum rationale overview, both containing a wealth of ideas and signposts to curriculum resources for both primary and secondary phases. These are: Dixon, D. Leadership for Sustainability: saving the planet one school at a time (Carmarthen: Independent Thinking Press, 2022) [hereafter Leadership for Sustainability] and Dolan, A.M. Teaching Climate Change in Primary Schools: An Interdisciplinary Approach (London: Routledge, 2022) [hereafter Teaching Climate Change]*

[11] *Golden, B. 'Creating teaching resources in response to the rapidly changing nature of climate change' in Teaching Climate Change, p.257*

[12] *Church of England Vision for Education: Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good (2016): <https://tinyurl.com/53pm4jr2>*

Such a theology implicates curriculum intent, development and approach. It provides a lens from which to deeply consider how a climate change education can contribute more meaningfully towards the flourishing of students and the world in which they inhabit. How this theological rationale of 'community of creation' might inform curriculum development, in contradistinction to a 'dominion' theology, is shown below[13].

	 <p>'Community of creation'</p>	 <p>'Dominion' theology</p>
Educating for wisdom, knowledge and skills	With a developing knowledge of the science and impact of climate change, pupils actively, critically and compassionately discern and act as advocates for the flourishing of the whole created order	Due to the curriculum, pupils may harbour an 'earth tourist' worldview in which the planet is viewed as a commodity to exploit. Knowledge and skills are developed/applied towards pursuing this aim
Educating for community and living well-together	Mindful of relationships to the world, others, themselves (and for many, God), pupils are acutely aware of how their actions can contribute to a flourishing planet and eco-systems which includes humans	Viewing humanity as 'above' non-human creation, pupils may focus overly on human communities to the neglect of wider creation of which we are a part
Educating for dignity and respect	Mindful of their interdependence with all of creation, pupils perceive and treat all aspects with respect and inherent worth	In viewing humans as 'premier league' in creation, wider aspects of creation may be viewed mainly in terms of their utility in meeting one's own wants and needs
Educating for hope and aspiration	Pupils have a vision for a flourishing world – their hope is stronger than despair. This animates their thinking and actions, often inspiring courageous advocacy	Pupil may be hopeful for a world in which they and wider humanity flourishes, perhaps instead or in spite of wider creation

[13] Using the four elements of 'Educating for...' found within the Church of England Vision for Education and the SIAMS Evaluation Schedule 2018: <https://tinyurl.com/nhbtu8xb>

A climate change education informed by a 'community of creation' theology offers a greater emphasis upon pupil agency, voice and opportunities. It brings together the 'heads, hearts and hands' framework (p.2), acknowledging that a curriculum offer which attends to all three aspects can enable pupils to respond in an informed and considered manner to climate change. According to Dixon[14], often it is 'heart' or 'hands' aspects which are in deficit; pupils may learn about climate change (head) but not have opportunity within the curriculum to connect with the planet or reflect upon how we might respond. Likewise, it would be limiting to encourage an emotional connection to the natural world (heart) without providing a grounding in the factors which have led up to the present situation (head). Bringing together all three can form the basis of a 'pedagogy of hope and action'[15] throughout the curriculum where pupils are empowered to act as advocates for the planet. Indeed, focussing on hope alongside meaningful and achievable actions (hands) can help alleviate the climate anxiety and despair that many in our school communities hold.

Spiritual development through the curriculum

Alongside collective worship and an embedded sustainability ethos, the curriculum can contribute significantly to pupils' spirituality. Indeed, the theological rationale for curriculum development described above – and its attendant 'head, hearts, hands' framework – enables rich, intentional opportunities for pupils to reflect upon their relationship to the world, others, self and God within a comprehensive climate change education (p.9). Seeing learning sites such as the classroom and outdoor areas as spiritual spaces[16] can assist us in providing meaningful encounters which help pupils develop as global citizens[17] who have, demonstrate and advocate a lasting heart for the earth.

[14] Dixon, *Leadership for Sustainability*

[15] Horgan, K. 'A reflective approach to climate change education' in *Teaching Climate Change*, pp. 60-71

[16] Lumb, A. *Spirituality in a Church School within a Performance-Driven Culture* (Cambridge: Grove Books Limited, 2016)

[17] See page 5 of Oxfam's *Global Citizenship in the Classroom: A Guide for Teachers*
<https://tinyurl.com/33hxyy8>

Questions for School Leaders to Reflect Upon

Vision/purpose

- In what ways does the school's vision encompass environmental issues and demonstrating a heart for the earth? What about the school's curriculum intent?
- What do you think about the 'community of creation' theology and 'heads, hearts, hands' framework? How might these enrich pupil thinking and reflection about the environment and ethical actions through the curriculum with regards to...
 1. content?
 2. knowledge?
 3. skills?
 4. values?
 5. attitudes?
- How important do you think 'a pedagogy of hope and action' is with regards to climate change? What might this look like in our context?
- In what ways is the school's understanding of spirituality and spiritual development shaping pupil enquiry into environmental issues within the curriculum? (This is our shared understanding of spirituality, therefore...)

Curricular opportunities

- Are environmental issues (such as climate change) embedded throughout and across the curriculum? What impact might/does this have on pupils having and demonstrating a heart for the earth?
- What might be/are the benefits of exploring these issues across a range of subject areas?
- To what extent are pupils developing an understanding of the science of climate change through the school's curriculum offer? How do we know?
- How are curriculum opportunities helping pupils build a connection to and with the natural world?

- In building this connection, what is/might be the merits in pupils' exploring the impact of human living and climate change from the perspective of the land and other life?
- Are pupils thinking about environmental issues locally to help set a context for learning which is then extended globally?
- How does the curriculum help pupils be courageous advocates for the earth? How might it further do so?
- How do/will we know the impact of our curriculum upon pupils' heart for the earth?

Trips and visitors

- Are there any visitors we could invite in to demonstrate how positive actions generate hope? (e.g. local businesses; those supporting/leading eco-initiatives)
- Are there any trips and visits that pupils go/could go on to demonstrate how positive actions generate hope? (e.g. wildlife sanctuary, eco-farm, recycling plant, sustainable woodland)
- How might trips help pupils develop their connection to and heart for the earth?

Other

- How might displays be used to help pupil thinking about environmental issues and climate change? What about exhibitions to champion pupil thinking to a wider community?
- Might activities at home be encouraged/suggested which develop a love and appreciation of the natural world? Perhaps even conversations about climate change and ethical/responsible living? What might the benefits of these be?
- What opportunities are there for teachers to weave climate change education through aspects of the school day, nurturing a culture of care for the world? What difference does this make in our school community?