

Listening Learning Leading

How a partnership with a school in Africa helps to develop opportunities in your school

*"Over the decade that the link has been established Mozambique has become absorbed into the fabric of the school."
Luckwell Primary School*



"Linking with a real school with real people in a real country has created the opportunity to raise awareness and understanding of different cultures in an easily accessible and relevant way."

Downend Secondary School



Understanding Partnership

International school partnerships have become increasingly important in our schools. Linking with another part of the world inspires the whole school community, allowing individuals, young and old to experience different cultures and open their minds to new ideas.

Embracing the global community helps to develop the local one.

Yet the value of a partnership with a school in Africa goes beyond cultural exchange. The global dimension can be found within the priorities of the national agenda; from the OfSTED inspection framework to sustainable schools, community cohesion, Student Voice and Every Child Matters.

When embedded in policies, leadership and ethos it challenges schools to think beyond their preconceptions and grow together.

Successful links are begun and delivered as part of both partners' curriculum and school improvement strategies. For UK schools this ensures that the benefits can be identified and mapped against the national agenda and key questions in the Self Evaluation Framework.

To have an understanding of how children's rights appear to be affected by cultural and environmental factors within the two locations and to reinforce the notion that the rights belong to all children wherever they live.

2.8 Extent to which pupils contribute to school and wider community

To enable pupils to be more active participants in school decision making processes related to the project

2.11 Extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

2.4 Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning

To develop ways of increasing parental/ community participation and involvement in the project

OfSTED Self Evaluation Framework Section A

2. How well are pupils doing?
3. How effective is the provision?
4. How effective are leadership and management?

3.3 The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs including through partnerships

To develop a greater knowledge and understanding of Global Citizenship issues by participation in curriculum based projects connected to human rights, sustainable development and interdependence

4.8 The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion

4.5 The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well being

To develop each community's awareness and understanding of human rights through a programme of activities focussed on children's rights

4.6 The effectiveness with which the school promotes equal opportunities and tackles discrimination

To celebrate and disseminate the learning and work which the partnership creates

Exploring how Brentry School's Partnership Aims link to the Self Evaluation Framework.

Listening: Promoting Community Cohesion

The guidance on community cohesion as part of the OfSTED inspection framework makes it clear that this is not only about links with the community within which the school is located, but also on national and global basis, involving a deepening of understanding of what it means to be British in a diverse and often divided society.

Schools will need to identify how they 'develop learners' understanding of other communities both in Europe and globally' (SEF 6b) and inspectors may ask pupils about the international links at their school (NCSL 'Inspecting Community Cohesion' 2009).

CASE STUDY: Luckwell Primary School, Bristol, partnered with Escola, Primaria de Maticuane, Beira, Mozambique

The link was initiated with the first wave of Bristol-Beira Twinning Association (BITA) activity in 2000. Our previous Headteacher was passionate about making a link with Southern Africa, believing strongly that in a mono-cultural community such as Bedminster the awareness of 'other' is crucial.

This legacy has lived on and our link remains a vital way of raising awareness of life beyond the immediate community.

Our children have very little experience of cultures beyond their own. Traditionally an attitude of apathy can prevail where families are not very motivated to search out new cultural experiences.

For example while many of our families take holidays in popular overseas locations such as the Spanish coast most have little experience of the country they are visiting beyond what the hotel has to offer.

Moves towards embracing multi-culturalism, such as this link, have been welcomed by families who recognise the importance of this as an integral part of the education of the 'whole child'.

In our parent questionnaires last year one parent said (in relation to this and other multi-cultural work undertaken in Y5):



"Most parents and kids at Luckwell don't have non-white friends (BS3 is very white!) The big wide world is a very mixed place. School should prepare kids for the big, wide world not just BS3,"

We seize and celebrate such parental contributions as moves towards shifting local attitudes.

The link is included in our School Improvement Plan and is a key global aspect of our Community Cohesion. When OFSTED inspected us in January 2009 they were particularly impressed by our efforts to redress the balance in this mono cultural community through our African link and said in their report

...pupils display a growing understanding of the diversity of cultures in both Britain and the wider world.

"Engaging with a school in another part of the world can bring many concepts to life in a very real sense. But it can also do much more than that: it can enable students to reflect on 'difference' and begin to challenge the prejudices and stereotypes that we all grow up with'.

Ted Cantle, Institute of Community Cohesion, 2009.

CASE STUDY: Kingsforest Primary School, partnered with Kakokwo Primary School, Uganda.

We set up a partnership with a large, rural primary school in the Masindi district; Kakokwo Primary School. This school was a big contrast to our modern, new built suburban school on the outskirts of Bristol.

When visiting the area we were captivated by the energy and enthusiasm of the Headteacher and wanted to engage further to the benefit of children and young people and staff both in the UK and Uganda.

Our curriculum project was split into two mini projects, *Health and Sanitation* and *The Use of Games to Promote Physical Development*, which we had agreed with our partner school.

We wanted to not only compare the two countries but to instill knowledge of culture into our children. We wanted our projects to have a purpose rather than be a forgotten partnership once we had returned.



We asked the children to draw some posters which promoted cleanliness and hygiene in our school.

The children were so keen to complete their posters and once they had finished they wanted to find out more information about Uganda and its people.

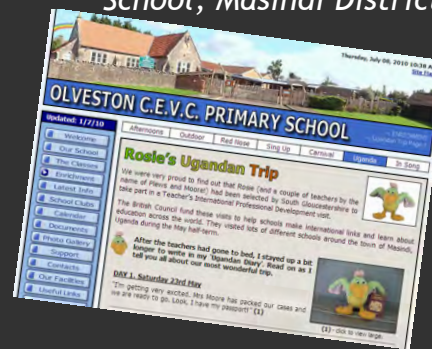
The impact on the school has been tremendous. Word of our visit obviously reached home, a few days after our return a parent approached us to work alongside his company to build a school in Uganda in the future.



What an impact it had for us as teachers - not only had we hit the hearts of our pupils, but we had also reached the wider community, this is Community Cohesion in practice...

By using our school website <http://www.olvestonschool.co.uk/uganda.html> we were able to share our experiences with our parents by means of a daily diary that the class mascot had written when away. This gave our parents an insight into the visit and enabled them to ask many questions relating to it.

Olveston CE VC Primary School, South Gloucestershire partnered with Bokwe Primary School, Masindi District, Uganda



International Partnerships support Community Cohesion through

- Building local connections represented by those members of the link country or region in the community.
- Creating shared values and a sense of belonging as young people discuss what aspects of their lives are most important and those which they want to share with their link school.
- Putting global issues into a real context through working with a partner school to examine issues.
- Gaining knowledge of the wider world to help young people understand and deal with issues closer to home.

Learning: Student Participation in Partnerships

Stay Healthy

International partnerships enable young people to consider the global impact of food choices, exercise and health of health issues that are significant in other settings.

“So much was learnt on every level - personally, professionally, and educationally. With respect to the teaching of PSHE and science there is no question that my awareness and confidence in the delivery of global issues has vastly improved and the whole concept of being a global citizen has now well and truly hit home and will influence my delivery of any curriculum issue or INSET.”

Downend Secondary School, South Gloucestershire, partnered with Mutunda Secondary School, Uganda.

Make a Positive Contribution

An understanding of a global dimension is an important strand in the Citizenship curriculum, and the development of responsible citizens is one of the aims of the revised curriculum, in which a global dimension is explicit. Through meaningful contact with other countries young people are encouraged to reflect on their own and others identities.

“The pupils find it easier having real life experiences to base their understanding upon. They have photographs of pupils whose parents have died of AIDS to relate to and recognise the responsibilities of teenagers who have lost their parents.”

Culverhill School, South Gloucestershire, partnered with Bweyale Primary School, Uganda

Stay Safe

Contact with young people and visiting adults from other countries and cultures helps develop confident individuals who respect diversity rather than finding threatening.

Every Child Matters

“We have now moved towards basing our Global Citizenship Programme on Children’s Rights. This was in response to the troubles that occurred in Kenya and the Kenyan government’s response to it, we are both introducing a curriculum for Peace.”

Broomhill Infant School, Bristol, partnered with Crater Primary School, Kenya.

Enjoy and Achieve

International partnerships enrich the curriculum. They support the development of literacy, particularly writing, by providing real audiences for children’s work. Importantly they also improve the quality of teaching by offering opportunities for teachers and leaders to learn from good practice in other countries and reflect on their own practice, in order to develop a world class education.

“The link has made our students aware of the world outside their living room. The Curriculum Activities encourage motivation and enthusiasm for learning using real interaction with people on another continent coping with very different issues to ourselves”

Henbury Secondary School, Bristol, partnered with Masindi Secondary School, Uganda

Achieve economic well being

The global economy means that today’s learners will work in a variety of contexts doing roles as yet undefined. Inter-school projects offer a unique opportunity to develop these skills and values. Partnerships help young people learn about the costs of travel, communication, and the differing costs and standards of living in different countries.

“International links are fundamental to the understanding of economic wellbeing the world over.”

Sarah Jones - Teaching and Learning Adviser (Global Citizenship/ International Education)
South Gloucestershire Local Authority

CASE STUDY: Henbury Secondary School, Bristol, partnered with Masindi Secondary School, Uganda.

Henbury School is located in a largely white area of Bristol who often do not leave their local area for their entire lives. We are now into the seventh successful year of the partnership. It began through a link that the Local Authority made with an English contact in Masindi and Henbury were keen to form a friendship with an African School. We have carried out a variety of Curriculum based projects in Geography, Art, English and Citizenship which have included a comparison of local areas, an examination of landscapes and colours and a play based around tribal languages in both schools.

The partnership is written into the School Improvement Plan

'School Improvement Priority 2: Develop & reward students' sense of responsibility for themselves, others and the environment

To further increase the Schools International links and raise the profile of our link school amongst the pupils."

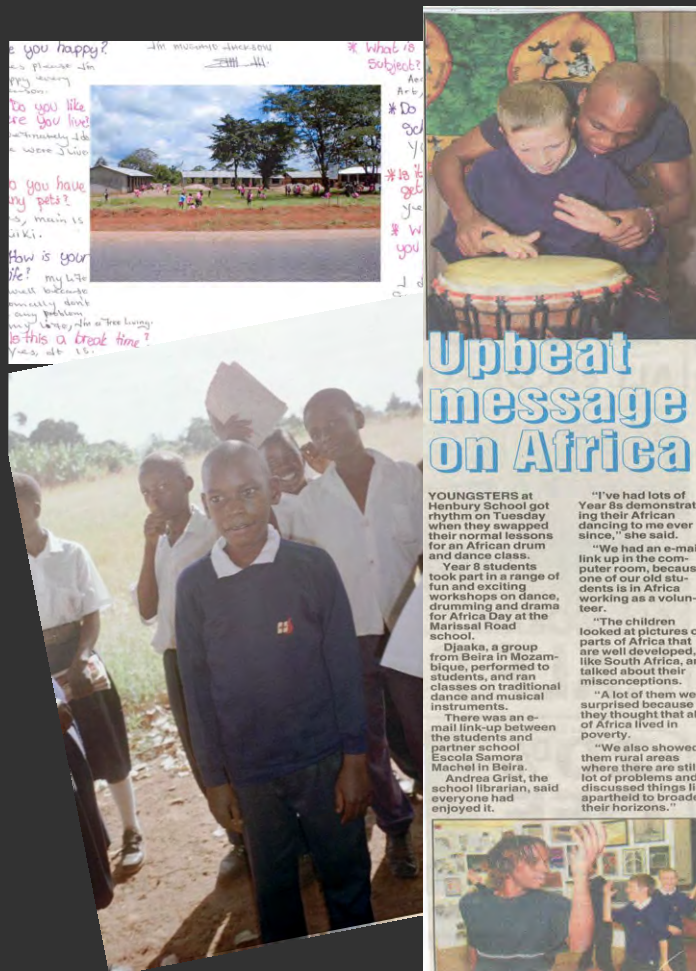
It is widely felt that the student exchange that is now in its third successive year has made a big contribution to school improvement.

The student exchange has meant that both Henbury and Masindi students are now very active in the planning and leading of the visits.

The Curriculum projects obviously mean that students implement ideas and work into the project in a very active and enthusiastic way. All students who go on the exchange are involved in evaluation in different forms - through assembly to the whole school, newsletter contribution and official evaluation to the Headteacher on their return.

"Science Club will utilise a program where a science concept is taught using only resources readily available to Mutunda School. This will improve their scientific knowledge and their ingenuity, especially when working with very limited but precious resources!"

Downend Secondary School, South Gloucestershire, partnered with Mutunda Secondary School, Uganda.



"In Year 6 the children use the knowledge they have acquired about culture, climate and economy in Mozambique to work on creating an eco-town. This year, at the end of their topic, the children had to present their eco-town in an end-of-topic exhibition. It was interesting and engaging to hear what the children had to say about sustainability and how their extensive experience of learning about Beira has impacted on their knowledge of sustainability, resilience and resourcefulness."

Luckwell Primary School, Bristol, partnered with Escola, Primaria de Matacuane, Beira, Mozambique

Leading: Sustainable Partnerships and School Development

CASE STUDY: Brentry Primary School, Bristol, partnered with Kitara Parents School, Masindi, Uganda.

In February 2004 a delegation of Bristol Headteachers and LEA coordinator travelled to Masindi and spent five days in schools.

The visit enabled personal contacts to be established, school contexts to be understood, lessons observations, discussion about curriculum and management issues, school and cluster level project planning focusing on the benefits of international education and the role of the leader in developing and sustaining change.

In September 2004 the visit was returned. They spent a substantial amount of time in their link school meeting staff, parents, governors and children together with representatives from local community groups, e.g. church leaders and local councillors.

There was also a joint art exhibition of all the schools' work on the theme of "Partnership" at Hengrove School and a concert.

At the exhibition opening and reception an 'Agreement of Cooperation' between Bristol and Masindi was signed by the Director of Education (Bristol) and witnessed by the Assistant District Education Officer (DEO) (Masindi).

There was also a joint leadership seminar on mutually agreed issues affecting school performance, e.g. parents, behaviour and discipline, curriculum and assessment and a significant amount of time devoted to individual and cluster planning and evaluation for the progress and future development of the links and the whole Bristol - Masindi partnership.

From this time onwards there have been reciprocal visits each September and February involving class teachers. These visits support the 'bringing alive' of the partnerships in the eyes of the children, giving them the opportunity to be taught by teachers from a different country.

The partnership between our school and Kitara Parents' School in Masindi, Uganda has developed and raised our understanding of differences and similarities between the education systems, teaching and learning styles, potential and constraints.

It is also interesting to find very similar 'problems' as experienced by teachers and leaders in both countries.

Throughout our school we are seeing a real increase in staff and pupil interest in global education.

This is supporting the development of children as citizens with a brief beyond their own country.

By forging school to school, class to class and pupil to pupil international links issues, understanding and learning becomes real.



Listening

"The backing of Senior Leadership Team (SLT) is of the utmost importance to ensure that a global dimension is central to school development and that sufficient funds and time are given to developing this area throughout the curriculum. The opportunity for various members of staff to visit the partner school helps promote an understanding throughout the whole school and therefore ensures that enthusiasm is spread throughout the staff."

Broomhill Primary School

Learning

"The value of Teachers International Professional Development (TIPD) visits is immeasurable, with less economically developed countries offering learning opportunities relating to cultural understanding, Citizenship, world economics and colonialism. However exchanges are hampered by technology and money, therefore long-term communication is challenging. It is also important to strike the balance to ensure the relationship does not become a charity."

Yate International Academy

Leading

"The partnership celebrates its tenth anniversary in 2010 and has been there longer than most of the staff, myself included. The link is as much a part of the structure and ethos of the school as the curriculum, staff and pupils - it would be difficult to imagine a Luckwell not linked with 'the school in Mozambique.'"

Luckwell Primary School

Developing your own Partnership

Accreditation

www.globalgateway.org.uk International Schools Award (ISA)

Websites

www.britishcouncil.org

www.globaldimension.org.uk

www.glean.org.uk

www.ukowla.org.uk

www.dfid.gov.uk/globalschools

Publications

Building Successful School Partnerships (Oxfam, 2007)

The Global Dimension in Action (QCDA, 2008)

Community Cohesion in Action (QCDA, 2010)

Sustainable Development in Action (QCDA, 2009)

Exploring Together, A Global Dimension to the Secondary Curriculum (DEA, 2009)

Acknowledgements

Val Bishop - Global Education Manager, African Initiatives

Jill Ritchie - International Consultant, Bristol

Sarah Jones - Teaching and Learning Adviser (Global Citizenship/International Education), South Gloucestershire

Christine Harvey - Broomhill Infant School, Bristol

Maureen Jackson - Yate International Academy, South Gloucestershire

Laura Shore - Luckwell Primary School, Bristol

Ceila Key - Henbury School, Bristol

Julie Arnold - Downend Secondary School, South Gloucestershire

Angela Burrige, Brentry Primary School, Bristol

Lesley Moore and Emma Plews - Olveston CE VC Primary School, South Gloucestershire

Alex Lyon and Sharon Jackson - Kings Forest Primary School, South Gloucestershire

Kerry Hiscock and Sarah Holt - Culverhill School, South Gloucestershire.