We don’t want a link like last time…”

Step back from the possible pitfalls of linking and ask

- Why do we want a partnership? Who and what is it for? Ask yourself whether partnership is the most effective way to achieve your aims and consider alternatives
- What images do we have of our partners? – Explore the purpose and value of a partnership and recognise that the process of setting up and sustaining one that is worthwhile is extremely complex.
- What assumptions are we making about our partner? – Partners learn together and learn from each other. Partnerships acknowledge that each has much to learn from the other. If real understanding is to take place it is essential to develop an equal, reciprocal and respectful relationship.
- Why is there a disparity of material resources between us? – Focus on how the fundraising activity is planned and undertaken; this charity can have an unintended negative impact by:
  - Reinforcing the stereotype that the North has control and money while the South is poor and needy
  - Increasing inequality, as the school in the North becomes the active giver and the school in the South becomes the passive receiver
  - Patronising the Southern partner by assuming that they need and want this help
  - Focusing the link on finance at the expense of education
  - Is it the right time in the development of our partnership to be fundraising?
  - Will our pupils’ mutual respect for pupils at our partner school be undermined?
  - Have we identified and agreed with our partner school a specific need for fundraising?
  - Could both schools contribute towards the fundraising activities?
  - Are there other ways in which we could support our partner school? eg sharing teachers, cameras… support an exchange visit.

Examples of well thought-out fundraising include recording music sung by students, exchanging students for a week, selling books and printed materials, sharing some lessons on CD-ROM, organising a cultural evening and selling souvenirs...

anticipation into partnership…look at ways of involving pupils in the School Development Plan.

participation is integral to the learning and teaching.

From linking to partnership...

- The fundraising issue…how the fundraising activity is planned and undertaken, this charity can have an unintended negative impact by:
  - Patronising the Southern partner by assuming that they need and want this help
  - Increasing inequality, as the school in the North becomes the active giver and the school in the South becomes the passive receiver

From linking to partnership...

- The partnership agreement between our two schools states that we want mutual knowledge and understanding – of cultures, of values, of interdependence, of our power to change.

Teacher involved in a Malawi/UK partnership

As a growing number of schools seek partners in other countries it’s vital to explore the purpose and value of a partnership and recognise that the process of setting up and sustaining one that is worthwhile is extremely complex. Partnerships between schools here and schools in the Majority World are too often a one-way street, with the agenda firmly set in the UK. Majority World partners have fed back concerns that UK schools may wrongly assume those schools in Africa, Asia, South America and the Caribbean want money more than educational links. In UK schools, linking is too often viewed as providing an opportunity for pupils to help people less fortunate than themselves. True partnerships acknowledge that each has much to learn from the other. If real understanding is to take place it is essential to develop an equal, reciprocal and respectful relationship.

“First you came to us as missionaries, then you came to us as colonisers, now you come to us as linkers.”

Participant at a Conference on linking, 2002

“A link is for life, not just for OFSTED.”

DEC project worker

This leaflet is produced by Reading International Solidarity Centre (RISC).

35-39 London Street • Reading RG1 4PS
t: 0118 958 6692
e: louise@risc.org.uk

www.risc.org.uk
School Partnerships & Curriculum Links

Art & Design
- include both traditional and contemporary art and artists from both countries
- acknowledge the global influences on art and artists
- reflect the diversity of artists working in each country

English
- explore identity, the meanings of names and the use of borrowed words
- consider the media portrayal of the same events in each country
- include the work of traditional and contemporary writers from both countries and the influence of poetry and prose, theatrical and oral traditions on literary expression

Maths
- use an investigation of food miles in the schools and their wider communities for data-handling
- examine and compare images on each other’s bank notes, use for activities on trade and exchange rates
- use mathematical activities to learn more about our own and each other's local community: housing, population, transport and work

PSHE
- exchange pupils’ work on healthy lifestyles
- discuss responses to bullying and the role of peer mediation
- explore pupils’ attitudes on race, gender, class, disability, sexuality, migrants and refugees

Citizenship
- share ways of involving pupils in decision-making through School Councils
- use the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child to explore pupils’ rights and responsibilities
- exchange pupils’ thoughts on their probable and preferable futures

Design & Technology
- design and exchange recipes using locally grown produce, favourite snacks, healthy snacks
- investigate dwellings and their use of materials in the locality of the schools
- reflect the developments and influences of textiles and textile technologies between cultures, past and present: weaving, dyeing, printing

History
- map the localities’ historical links with the wider world
- research and exchange family histories
- study the biographies of significant individuals in each other’s countries or the same biographies from around the world: Mary Seacole (the Americas), Gandhi (Asia), Nelson Mandela (Africa), Florence Nightingale (Europe)

Modern Foreign Languages
- acknowledge bilingualism in each country, and learn and share greetings
- conduct a survey of languages spoken in the wider communities
- study the historical reasons for the global spread of European languages

Music
- include both traditional and contemporary music and musicians from both countries
- acknowledge the global influences on music and musicians
- reflect the diversity of musicians working in each country

Science
- develop school gardens and learn about growing food and composting the schools’ waste
- compare Global Footprints and each schools’ consumption, conservation and waste of resources such as energy and water
- acknowledge and celebrate the contribution to scientific achievement by people from the Majority World, past and present

Drama
- use drama to dispel myths about ourselves and each other
- share proverbs as scenarios for drama
- investigate dwellings and their use of materials in the locality of the schools
- reflect the developments and influences of textiles and textile technologies between cultures, past and present: weaving, dyeing, printing

ICT
- research the use of landlines and mobile phones in each community
- research the most effective means of communication between the schools
- design websites/pages reflecting the partnership, exchange data

PE
- collect and exchange playground games and each other's bank notes, use for activities on trade and exchange rates
- use for activities on trade and exchange rates
- compare Global Footprints and each other’s local community: housing, population, transport and work

Teeth & Tongue
- the teeth and the tongue are different, but complementary
- we need both to speak
- symbol of interdependence and co-operation

Help Me & Let Me Help You
- the left hand washes the right, and in turn the right hand washes the left
- we depend upon each other
- symbol of interdependence and co-operation

Two Good Friends
- fruitful ideas are born when two heads come together
- symbol of friendship

Adinkra symbols
- symbol of interdependence
- we depend upon each other
- the teeth and the tongue are different, but complementary
- symbol of interdependence and co-operation

All the Peppers
- all the peppers on the same tree do not ripen at the same time
- symbol of unequal opportunity and uneven development

Resources to support partnership
Global School Partnerships offer grants for reciprocal visits www.britishcouncil.org/globalschools.htm
There are an increasing number of publications available with information and advice about linking/partnerships. We think this is the most useful:
Produced by a long established linking organisation, this guide explores linking in its broadest context and encourages wider community partnerships. It encourages schools to consider whether linking is the best way forward and suggests a variety of options to develop a Global Dimension.

Just Linking Leeds DEC KS2
This handbook is a practical guide based on the experiences of primary teachers who have developed successful links between schools within the UK.

Speaking for Ourselves, Listening to Others Leeds DEC KS2/3
An invaluable resource for exploring children’s perceptions, featuring children from Britain, Kenya and Greece.

Citizenship for the Future David Hicks WWF-UK KS3/4
The best resource around for encouraging students to consider what kind of world they want to live in, and their role in creating it.

The resources listed are available on mailorder from RISC.
We also have other theme focused packs available.
Contact Liz Allum at RISC: 0118 958 6692, e: liz@risc.org.uk

Letters from… Bangladesh, China, France, India, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kenya and Spain Cherrytree Books KS1/2
A series containing penpal letters introducing children, their families, schools and where they live.