

July 2008

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

Cambridgeshire Advisory Service

Special points of interest:

- School Linking
- E-linking
- Linking across the world

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To: International Coordinator

This issue focuses on collaborative learning with partners abroad.

Thinking about Linking

This a dedicated area on the globalgateway site for schools looking to start a school partnership or develop an existing partnership link. The site is built around three key areas :

- How do we decide where or how to link?
- We'd really like some links but there are too many options
- We've already got a link school but haven't really made a start

Links from each area take you to the 'ideas engine'. This includes further areas to consider with links to possible ways forward.

The site encourages you to think about linking before starting to link.

So if you want to find out what

would suit your school best, you can find your own way through this tour of the options so that you can identify the partnerships, projects or programmes you would like to follow up. Go to:

<http://www.globalgateway.org.uk/>

The hyperlink to 'Thinking about Linking' is under the heading 'Special Zones' on the Gateway. Links under this heading also include:

- Teachers' ICT Toolkit: a summary of possible ways to link using ICT (with hyperlinks to further information).
- Festivals and Special days: A calendar across the world which includes activities and resources you can adapt for every week of the school year.

Overleaf are summaries of some projects that you may want to consider. The level of commitment required to make them a successful experience varies. What is manageable?

Linking Through ICT



Relevant web addresses for iEARN are below.

<http://www.iearn.org/>

Collaborative projects initiated and designed by teachers and students provide examples of how technology can make a difference in learning.

Collaborative learning takes place through Learning Circles, a team of 6-8 teachers and their classes joined in the virtual space of an electronic classroom. The groups remain together over a 3-4 month period working on projects drawn from the curriculum of each of the classrooms on a selected theme. At the end of the project the groups produce a final 'product' of the collaborative learning, for example, creative writing anthologies, websites, performances. Then the Learning Circle comes to an end.

The two windows for Learning Circles are: September - January and January - May. Each window begins with new groupings. Changes of partners mean that teachers, pupils and students are learning from new people and experiences.

The majority of iEARN's membership is based in North and South America and Asia, though members often advertise for UK participants. You can join iEARN in two ways.

Firstly you can register with iEARN and use the forums and newsletters to find a project to join. Secondly you can join a Learning Circle, by becoming a member of iEARN and then completing an iEARN Learning Circle placement form two weeks before the beginning of the window. Information on Learning Circles can be found at:

<http://www.iearn.org/circles/>



Relevant web addresses for eTwinning are below.

The eTwinning website is at:

<http://www.etwinning.net/>

eTwinning enables schools in 28 European countries to work together using Information and Communication Technology (ICT). Schools can register their details, search for partners and engage in online partnerships through ICT.

eTwinning users can access a free online workspace dedicated to registered schools.

The language on the site can be changed using the drop down menu top right.

Support for schools using eTwinning is provided by The British Council at:

<http://www.britishcouncil.org/etwinning>

This site has information on registering on the eTwinning portal and workshops for teachers on how to use eTwinning.

Resources to support eTwinning school partnerships include links to ICT tools and useful documents for planning an eTwinning project.

Ideas for projects using ICT and other digital technologies cover 5 thematic areas - Science and Technology; Sport and Leisure; Arts, Music and Culture; Press and Media; Government and Society.

There are also video podcasts from UK schools that have used the eTwinning site. Here teachers talk about their projects, partnerships and the international experience eTwinning gives their pupils/students.

Comenius - Linking in Europe



Find out about Comenius



The British Council information on Comenius activities is at:

<http://www.britishcouncil.org/comenius.htm>

Comenius Professional Development

Comenius in-service training grants are available for staff in schools to attend a training activity in any of the 30 participating countries across Europe. The opportunities include formal courses as advertised in the Comenius Training Database and job shadowing.

As a UK applicant for Job Shadowing, you need to identify the colleague abroad who you wish to job shadow and agree a job shadow plan with that colleague and their institution. The plan might take the form of an email from your colleague setting out briefly what is planned for each day of your visit.

Funding is available up to 1500 Euro for 1 week, 2000 Euro for 2 weeks and up to a maximum of 2500 Euro for 6 weeks. (A higher grant may be awarded where special needs or exceptionally high travel costs are involved.)

The British Council's Comenius web pages outline the steps for applying for both these professional development opportunities. The final deadline for activities starting between 1st January 2009 and 31st March 2009 is 30th September 2008 (depending on sufficient available funds).

Comenius Assistants

Comenius Assistants bring to life aspects of their home country. They work 12-16 hours per week in schools. They could get involved in a variety of different subjects and they offer

a European perspective. Assistants with an interest or skill in a specific area could contribute to the curriculum in these areas. They must also teach a minimum of 2 hours of their native language.

Schools are expected to have a regular timetable in place, and to offer regular monitoring to support their Comenius Assistant's development.

Comenius Assistants receive a monthly grant and travel allowance from their home National Agency so there is no salary cost to the host school. The cost is in supporting the assistant and in helping them to find accommodation.

The application forms for Comenius Assistants will be available later this year. The deadline for applications is the start of February.

Comenius Partnerships

Comenius Partnerships are funded opportunities that enable pupils, students and staff from across Europe to work together on joint projects.

Bilateral partnerships offer students aged over 12 years the opportunity to become actively involved in a joint project with a European partner institution and include a reciprocal exchange for students.

Multilateral partnerships involve at least three schools or colleges from at least three European countries. If you do not have a group of schools to make a partnership, contact seminars across Europe bring together institutions to make contact with potential partners to submit a Comenius school partnership application.

The Partnerships link provides details of the process and other information to support schools. Clearly these partnerships require a high level of commitment.

Linking across the world



The web address for the Department for International Development (DfID) Global School Partnerships (GSP) programme is below.

<http://www.britishcouncil.org/globalschools.htm>

GSP promotes partnerships between schools in the UK, Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean. The programme aims to raise young people's awareness of global development issues and equip them with the skills and knowledge to become active global citizens.

For schools looking for partner schools GSP provide advice and guidance. An introductory workshop encourages you to think about the type of partnership you want to establish as well as giving you some ideas for activities to do in the early stages of a partnership. This is offered as a face-to-face or online workshop.

For schools already involved in a partnership GSP provide guidance on good practice and professional development workshops. Grants are also available for reciprocal visits and global curriculum projects.

The site has a link to [Partners in Learning](#) which is a comprehensive guide for those interested in, or already involved in, learning partnerships with global dimension goals.



The web address for this programme is below.

<http://www.britishcouncil.org/learning-connecting-classrooms.htm>

This project allows for three-way partnerships between schools in sub-Saharan Africa and the UK.

Schools apply to the programme in clusters of three. If successful, they will be invited to a contact seminar where they will form partnerships with two other clusters from two other countries.

The purpose of the programme is to enable intercultural dialogue and to increase knowledge and understanding of each other's societies.

Each partnership is entitled to £15,000 per year, for up to three years, to take part in study visits, to purchase materials, and meet certain other costs associated with the project. The partnership decides how best to manage the grant.

The deadline for partnerships starting from 2008 is now closed and we are awaiting details of the next round of applications.

CONTACT

Mark Oliver
General Adviser - MFL & IE
Cambridgeshire Advisory Service
Stanton House
Stanton Way
Huntingdon
Cambs
PE29 6XL

Phone: 01480 375802
Fax: 01480 376142
Email: mark.oliver@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

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