



School2School Friendship Program



Connecting students across the Commonwealth



Joint Ministers' Statement

In March 2006, 4,500 athletes and 1,500 officials from 71 Commonwealth Nations will unite in Melbourne for the XVIII Commonwealth Games.

One of the many innovative initiatives of the Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games Education Program is the School2School Friendship Program, which aims to connect students from across the Commonwealth. Through the School2School Program, schools can create and nurture friendships and develop an enhanced understanding of their place as global citizens.

The cultural exchanges that will be shared through School2School, and the relationships that will be forged will help students from Victoria and the wider Commonwealth to make authentic links with each other and to gain unique cultural understandings.

We encourage you to participate in School2School or to use the guidelines and examples in this book to help establish your own links with schools in the Commonwealth and to reap the significant benefits in your classroom.

JUSTIN MADDEN MLC
Minister for Commonwealth Games

LYNNE KOSKY MP
Minister for Education and Training

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Front cover images

1. *Three year old Gaia, meets Melbourne 2006 Mascot, Karak in Praslin, part of the Seychelle Islands. Copyright Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games Corporation. Photo: prpix.com.au*
2. *Students at St Thomas Primary School Sale, dance with the Wala Ghanaian dancers.*
3. *Students from Keilor Downs College will partner up with Lubiri Secondary School in Central Uganda.*
4. *School children perform traditional Hindustani and Punjabi dances to welcome the Melbourne 2006 Queen's Baton to Noida Stadium, Noida, India. Copyright Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games Corporation. Photo: prpix.com.au*
5. *7500 Children line the streets of Banjul. The Gambia. Copyright Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games Corporation. Photo: prpix.com.au*
6. *Cultures coming together in celebration of the Baton in The Gambia. Copyright Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games Corporation. Photo: prpix.com.au*
7. *Local children await the arrival of the baton at an official ceremony at the University of Botswana. Copyright Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games Corporation. Photo: prpix.com.au*
8. *Young boys dressed in 'Baju Melayu' (traditional Malay dress) welcome the Melbourne 2006 Queen's Baton to the small town of Kuala Muda, north east Malaysia. Copyright Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games Corporation. Photo: prpix.com.au*
9. *Marina Primary School, Banjul line the streets to watch the Baton pass by. The Gambia. Copyright Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games Corporation. Photo: prpix.com.au*
10. *A Glen Iris Primary School student, Victoria.*
11. *The Senior Class at St Mary's School Ascot Vale, embrace the spirit of the Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games.*
12. *The Baton arrives in Windhoek and is held by the Namibian Special Olympics team. Copyright Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games Corporation. Photo: prpix.com.au*

Introduction

The School2School Program through which Victorian schools can create friendships with schools in the wider Commonwealth will promote greater global awareness and cultural understanding.

There are a variety of ways that you can manage friendships with another school. Using 'snail mail', students can choose to write letters, send photographs or even exchange taped greetings to each other. Or you can communicate using the internet and the many online communication tools it offers. It is up to you to determine how you would like to communicate with a partner school.

As the classroom teacher, you will be pivotal in establishing and nurturing a positive and productive long distance relationship with your partner school colleague and students. You will be the project catalyst. However, this does not and should not mean that you will be overburdened by the tasks or overwhelmed by the project's demands. The extent of work and time commitment is up to you and there are many different strategies you can use to share the responsibility and the workload with your students and with your partner colleague.

This booklet provides you with many useful hints, advice and guidelines to help get you started and links to projects and networks that you can access which will assist in finding a partner and beginning an School2School friendship.

Objectives of the School2School Friendship Program:

- › To encourage lasting linkages between schools in Australia and schools in other Commonwealth countries;
- › To promote greater global awareness, cultural understanding and knowledge of other Commonwealth countries among students in Victorian schools;
- › To encourage students to support a visiting team at the time of the Games;
- › To promote greater knowledge of other Commonwealth countries and cultures.

Below:

Students at St Thomas Primary School, Sale learn about Ghana, country of their Adopted Second Team.



How to steps:

Practical hints and guidelines for establishing School2School in your school

Step 1

Finding your partner school

In Term 4, 2005 you can register for the School2School Friendship Program by going to www.melbourne2006.com.au/education and following the prompts to the School2School page. Although registrations for the program close at the end of Term 4, this should not stop you from establishing your own direct relationship with a school in the Commonwealth or in any other country. You can find some links to useful networks on the back cover of this booklet. You can also find out about the second team adopted by your local council by going to www.dvc.vic.gov.au/ocgc/getting%20involved/adopt.htm.

Privacy is a crucial issue to consider at all stages of your project participation and keeping the wider school community, especially parents, informed will help to allay any fears or concerns. It is important at this stage that the parents of your students are informed about your class' participation in the School2School Friendship Program. This can be done through a letter that goes home or an article in the school newsletter. Outline the type of information that will be shared with the partner school such as student work (stories, letters, photographs, art work, audio and video recordings), which may include basic information about the students and their families.

For example: *To celebrate the Commonwealth Games, (insert school name), will be participating in the School2School Friendship Program. The School2School Program is an exciting opportunity for our students to connect with students from around the world. Our participation will involve.....*

Step 2

What do you know and what can you find out?

Once the school with which you are to be partnered has been decided, find out as much information as you can about the country, region, city, language and culture of this nation. Access your local council if your partner school is from your Commonwealth Games *Adopt a Second Team's* country and find out as much as you can about what is happening in your local council area in the lead up to the Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games. Work with your students to explore their prior knowledge about the country and identify the things they would like to learn. You could use various strategies like a KWL (What I Know, What I Want to Know, What I have Learned) graphic organiser to do this.

Step 3

Making contact

Decide on the best method of communication and contact with your partner school. As the teacher facilitating the project, correspond with your partner colleague and negotiate the best means of communication with them. The time this will take will inevitably be influenced by their access to technology, their time zone, their language, and school year dates. Working this out may only take a few days if you both have easy access to email, but it may take a month or more if you need to write a letter and post it. The design of your collaboration and interaction will be informed by both your (and their) access to technology within each classroom. Work on getting the understanding between the two classes clear and agreed upon as soon as possible.

Step 4

Are you on the same page?

Keep managing those expectations

What you do next is up to you! This is an ideal time to establish the boundaries of the relationship with your partner colleague. You can draw on the notes in the checklist on the following page to assist with this step. If you do this now, you will be able to develop a relationship which could extend beyond the Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games and which may cause fewer frustrations because you have the same expectations across the miles. You may now choose to work with your class to develop an introductory document – hard copy or electronic – which encapsulates the first key message and introductions you want to send to your partner school.

Step 5

The first task for you and your partner school

Pair up your students and ask them to begin by writing short, snappy autobiographies which include information like their age, gender, family, cultural background, nickname, interests, hobbies, sports, music preferences and a few funny stories. Ask their partner to review the writing before it even goes to the Student Management Team (SMT) – if you have one (see checklist). Then, it's time to type it up or redraft it so it is ready for sending off. The autobiographies can be merged together into one word document, which can easily be printed off and mailed or attached in an opening email. The aim may then be for you and your partner colleague to link up or *buddy* students with similar interests (or who sound like they might benefit from being linked with a particular student etc).

Step 6

Keeping it going: sustaining the relationship

The level of involvement and interaction is completely up to you and will be defined by the class time you are able to allocate to the task and your access (and your partner colleague's access) to technology. It is up to both of you to effectively facilitate and sustain the relationship. Long distance relationships can be very rewarding but they are not always easy. Sometimes the expectations of one partner do not coincide with the other's. It is vital that you work hard to keep communication channels between your colleague and yourself open, vigorous and sustained. Utilise the skills of your SMT to monitor your student involvement but also use them and your class to generate new, imaginative ideas for what to do next. You will find more advice on sustaining the relationship on the last page of this booklet.

Getting started: Checklist

Here is a checklist to help you in your initial planning and to clearly identify and manage both your and your partner school's expectations of your School2School friendship:

- Is the partnership and the activities you are planning based on strong links to your curriculum?**
- Have you agreed on a defined purpose, process of communication and structure?**
 - › How often do you think you will be able to communicate with your partner school (weekly, monthly)?
 - › What are your expectations in terms of turnaround time? Do you want your class to be able to respond to your partner school within 24 hours or a week (and visa versa)?
 - › Can you readily integrate your involvement into your teaching program and easily make class time for School2School-related activities?
- Do both you and your partner school colleague have a clear understanding of the requirements and commitment levels stated and are happy to meet them?**
 - › The relationship you establish needs to be founded on educational activities and sharing. If your partner school is in a developing nation, you are not expected to provide them with resources. The focus of this relationship is cross-global cultural exchange. It is up to you whether or not you and your class later decide to include the sending of classroom resources like books, paint and pens as the relationship develops.
- Have you decided on clear and agreed outcomes, actions or products for the project?**
 - › Will your relationship be ad hoc and reactive or themed, or a combination of both?
 - › An ad hoc/reactive approach may see you initiating contact by sending a batch of introductory letters and then waiting for responses, replying to these responses as they come and so on.
 - › A themed approach may involve you working closely with your partner colleague and planning either a project or weekly or monthly themes.
- Have you agreed upon a timeline for the initial stage of the School2School relationship, which can then be reviewed and extended? (See the last page of this booklet for advice on sustaining the relationship after the Games.)**
- Have you worked out your classroom management approach to best facilitate this involvement?**
 - › How are you going to manage the workload? Have you thought of establishing a class Student Management Team (SMT) which will be able to assume various responsibilities within the project such as planning, troubleshooting technical problems (e.g. email issues), reviewing emails/ letters before they are sent, printing out documents, training other students, helping to plan themes for correspondence and facilitate activities?
 - › On what basis do you want the friendship to be formed? Will it be a whole class to whole class set of communication and collaborative activities or student 'buddy' to student 'buddy' or a combination of both?
- Have you agreed on the technology requirements for the relationship and can both your schools meet them?**
 - › If you are using ICT, establish what sort of connection your partner colleague has at their school or in their classroom. If access is difficult or only by a telephone line, consider sending them text-only emails and burn all your digital images and presentations onto a CD or print them out in a booklet and send them via post.
- Can both schools (teachers, students) be flexible and responsive throughout the project relationship so that the project can change direction as new opportunities and ideas arise?**

Etiquette and Netiquette

Communicating with others, whether using snail mail or electronic media, has rules and behavioural expectations. It will be important for you to establish guidelines for acceptable behaviour for your students in their communication with their partner school or buddy. Outline your expectations clearly, or even negotiate a set of expectations with them and publicise these around the classroom, so that your students clearly understand how they should treat each other. Here is a list of some key things you may like to highlight with them.

Etiquette

- › Understand that the first language of students in your partner school may not be English, so your students need to write clearly and also be tolerant when they receive responses back that may have grammatical or spelling errors. (You could always ask them to write a letter back in the first language of your partner school to emphasise how difficult it can be to communicate in a language which is not your first language.)
- › Your students should remember that the focus for the exchange is a sharing of cultural insights and the nurturing of new friendships. They need to be polite, friendly and well mannered in their correspondence: be it in hard copy or electronic formats. Be aware of any bullying or disrespectful content in students' emails/letters.

Netiquette

- › CAPS LOCK: if you type CAPITAL LETTERS in an email, that's the web version of SCREAMING or SHOUTING – recipients could get quite offended....so be careful not to lock that key!
- › Chain letters: sending chain letters to someone can be illegal, can be a hoax or can simply put a bad taste in someone's mouth. Avoid them; they're a waste of time and energy.
- › Line spacing: If you have a long email to send, try to break up and chunk together bits of information so it is easy to read. Reading on the screen is pretty difficult anyway, so if you chunk your content into paragraphs, you'll find the recipient will be able to read your points more clearly and be more receptive to what you're saying.
- › Keep your communications concise and pointed. Remember, many users don't have unlimited internet time.
- › Think of the importance of tone. This is as important in an online discussion room and in emails, as it is when you and your students are chatting face-to-face with someone. Also, think of how you sign off your emails – are you abrupt, friendly, cheery, formal? Do you use: 'bye', 'cheers', 'regards', just your name or just your signature?
- › Be careful of what you say/write: once your comments are written and emailed or posted on the web in a discussion group, they can be forwarded, cut and pasted and sent anywhere.

- › Get your students to read, re-read and read their text again before you send it....especially if the message is important. It is easy to get a message fowled up by misplaced or poorly chosen words.
- › You can add humour to your messages by using smileys, and other emoticons which you create from the characters on your keyboard. Here are some examples:

| | |
|------------------|-----------------|
| :-) happy | :-@ screaming |
| ;-) wink | :-D laughing |
| :-e disappointed | :-I indifferent |
| :-(sad | :-< mad / angry |
| :-o surprised | a<G> grinning |

- › In emails you send or post to discussion groups, always clearly identify the subject of your message in the subject line.
- › Be careful of the size of files you attach to emails: large files can be impossible to download or take several hours when the recipient only has a telephone connection.
- › Think of the format you will use for images: bitmaps take up a lot of space while jpegs tend to be smaller in size. You may have to resize an image if it is too large to send.
- › Don't think you're anonymous! It is easy to think that because you're sitting at home at your computer, that you can be considered pretty anonymous in any communications you may have. You're not. What you write, send and say needs to be considerate and considered.

Safety and Ethical considerations when using the internet

Safe and ethical use of email and the internet in your classroom is a considerable concern for most teachers. While we try to balance development of student responsibility and information literacy, we also need to ensure that we have strategies in place to deal with unacceptable use of these technologies. Issues of safety and acceptable usage need to be addressed before students access the computers and in the initial stages of the developing School2School relationship.

Acceptable Use Policies

Your school, cluster or region may already have Acceptable Use Policies (AUP) in place to outline the expectations of students using computers and sanctions for unacceptable usage. It should also cover issues of privacy and copyright, as well as the

types of searches conducted, websites visited and email content sent and received. Signing an AUP will help your students to understand their rights and responsibilities that will influence their involvement in the School2School Friendship Program.

There are no quick or easy answers to deciding what is 'safe' and 'unsafe' for children communicating or collaborating internationally. As a teacher, you will need to use your professional judgement which will be in line with your school's policy approach about how best to handle these issues for your own students.

Some more hints:

- › Students should use school or class email addresses rather than their own private email addresses.
 - Students should not provide personal details such as their home address.
- › It is important that your students are aware that communication with their School2School partner should not include inappropriate or illegal content or inaccurate and misleading information.
- › If you opt to use a chat room or weblog with your School2School partner, be careful to ensure it is a closed online community so that no pseudo identities or unacceptable visitors can make contact.
- › If you are publishing any student work, comments or ideas, ensure that you are always aware of privacy and avoid publicising yours or your students' personal details. Under Copyright laws, children own their own work. If a student is under the age of 18 years, you require parental permission to publish their work.
- › When you send or receive emails or attachments such as presentations or images, ensure you have up to date virus protection software as viruses can easily be passed on by email.
- › Monitor your students' use of the technology by reviewing their input yourself or establishing a class Student Management Team (SMT). You may even consider using filtering software.
- › It is important that your students do background research and develop an understanding of the cultural similarities, differences and possible sensitivities between Australia and your partner school's country. All correspondence between these schools needs to reflect cultural awareness, respect and appreciation.
- › If your class is developing presentations which use images or text from other sources such as a third party, it is important that issues of copyright and intellectual property are considered.
- › If digital images are shared, they should not contain students' full names. Refer to the Victorian Government Schools' Reference Guide 4.6.1.2.2 – Student Photographs and the Internet.

Dos and Don'ts

- Do**
- › Be flexible, creative and responsive;
 - › Negotiate and agree with your partner colleague on the relationship's scope, boundaries, expected commitments and tasks at the outset;
 - › Set up a Student Management Team (SMT) to share the workload;
 - › Communicate clearly, openly and regularly with your partner colleague in the early planning stages of your involvement;
 - › Think outside the box and try to use a variety of media and technologies in your communications if you have access to these;
 - › Try to theme and plan ahead so that the relationship can be sustained beyond the Commonwealth Games;
 - › Ensure your students have a clear understanding of netiquette/etiquette, their ethical responsibilities and safety issues when communicating long distance;
 - › Draw upon all the resources in your classroom, your school, from the Commonwealth Games Education Program (and website) and beyond, to help you in your work. You will find a list of website resources on the back cover of this booklet.
 - › Understand the holiday breaks, term dates and time zone of your partner school and how this may impact on your planning and project tasks.
- Don't**
- › Expect to do everything yourself;
 - › Expect it all to happen immediately – small steps is a good way to start and as the relationship develops you will start to see patterns emerging and begin to be able to plan new things.

Activities you can do in your school

The types of activities you can undertake with your class are only restricted by your imagination and the communication tools to which you and your partner school have access. These activities can occur synchronously or asynchronously. When communication is *asynchronous* it does not occur in real time (right here, right now): there is a delay in receipt of and response to communications. Discussion boards, emails, weblogs, hard copy snail mail are generally *asynchronous*. When communication is *synchronous* it occurs in real time: live chat, organised live streamed video, some chat room messaging, videoconferences and teleconferences are all *synchronous*.

Your ability to undertake activities, which are *synchronous* or *asynchronous*, will depend on your access and your partner school's access to the different communication technologies as well as the time zone of your partner school. To help you in your planning, here are some activity ideas:

Get Creative

Letters can include information on so many different topics. Why not suggest that your students write about:

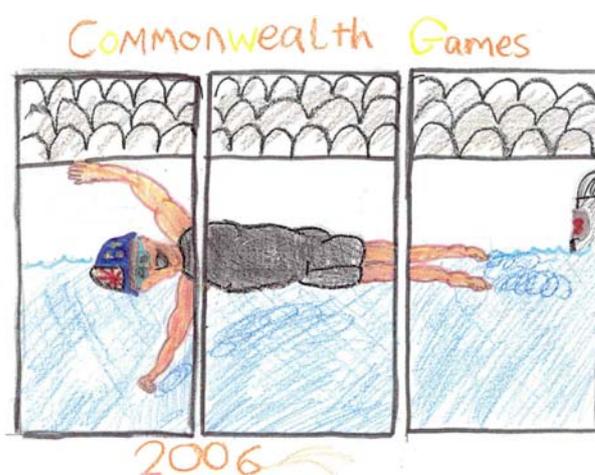
- › Where they live;
- › What they do on the weekend;
- › Their families and pets;
- › Their favourite foods, sports, books or movies;
- › Their hopes for the future – tertiary education, a career, etc; or,
- › Key attractions in Victoria – the beach, Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG), Federation Square, Birrarung Marr or the zoo.

Turn a blank wall into a mural

This class activity could see some spare wall space in the school transformed into a magical piece of art. In their letters your class could ask their counterparts in their partner school about the iconic images that should be included in the mural, and then act on this advice. Individual pictures could be painted to decorate the interior wall of a classroom. Iconic images from your partner school could include plants, flags, animals and landscapes. Think of Canada's maple leaf, the United Kingdom's lion, New Zealand's kiwi and Zambia's Victoria Falls. Iconic Victorian images may include the beach, trams, MCG, Aussie Rules football, parks and gardens and the Yarra River.

A Day in the Life

Ask your students to chronicle 24 hours in a typical day in their life – supplementing their writing with digital images, audio grabs, drawings, paintings and even digitised video. Get them to include descriptions of what they see when they first open their eyes in the morning (what their room is like, they could even draw their own birds' eye view of their bedroom), what they eat for breakfast, what their back yard and house look like, if they have brothers, sisters, pets, how they go to school, what they do in school, who they play with during recess and lunchtime and what they do, what happens after school, (if they watch television how long for and what do they watch), what are they reading and when they go to bed. These can be captured into discreet electronic documents like mini-portfolios or web pages, or PowerPoint presentations or simple hard copy diary entries. Collect them together and send them to your partner school.



Above (top to bottom):

1. *At the Commonwealth Games 2006*, by Katie, Christ Church Grammar School, South Yarra.
2. *Swimming at the Commonwealth Games*, by a Christ Church Grammar student.

Paint a picture / take a digital photo

Encourage your students to draw pictures of themselves and their families, their pets and their friends. This activity teaches students about different forms of communication – verbal and non-verbal. Use a digital camera and collate a class digital collage or presentation of everyone and their families.

A Passage to Your Partner School Country

If your class were to go on an excursion from Victoria to your partner school's country, how would you get there? What countries would you pass through, what oceans would you cross? What are the Visa requirements? What might they write in a Travel Journal? What would they expect to find at the airport and when they arrived at the school? What would life be like in their partners' homes? What would they eat, sleep on, do for leisure?

Sing a song

From "Advance Australia Fair", "Waltzing Matilda", "True Blue", "I Still Call Australia Home" to "Tie me Kangaroo Down", or even the latest pop songs, there are so many iconic Australian songs. Record an Australian song in the music class; consider videotaping the performance and digitising it onto CD or DVD and sending it to your partner school.

Fancy a Feast

One of the most obvious differences or similarities between you and your partner school may be the sort of foods eaten in each country. Work with your students to develop a typical class recipe book and send it to your partner school. Ask them to do the same and trial a couple of the recipes. What are your students' reactions?

Headline exchange

Your partner school's country and Australian society may be very different, or very similar. Ask your students to brainstorm the similarities and differences they perceive between themselves and their partner school students. Then, try this headline activity to reflect on whether or not they want to review and revise their prior knowledge. One of the clearest ways of seeing this is through the media. Newspapers reflect our societies. An interesting activity is for matched schools to nominate a day and then exchange newspapers from that day. For example, what happened in your partner school's city on 30 November 2005? And in Victoria? Another option is for classes to compare the way an international event is reported in each country and reflect on reasons for different or similar portage.

Sports exchange

What are the most popular sports at your school for girls and boys? Ask your partner school the same question. Think about reasons for this and how location, culture and background can influence the sports in which you become involved. Look at the sports included in the Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games and even the Medal Tally of your respective countries and discuss reasons why each country might become involved in or excel at particular sports. Send information to your partner school about your favourite sports and the rules behind them and see if your class can trial running a favourite sport from your matched country.

Name days

While Jason and Kylie may be common names in Victorian schools, in your partner country children's names might be quite different. Find out from your partner school and ask them to help give each of your students a new name. Your students will learn how to pronounce it.

Economic Exchange

The Commonwealth of Nations also reflect important trading relationships. Many industry sectors rely on selling their goods and services with their counterparts in Australia and across the Commonwealth to sustain a successful economy.

By comparing the cost of some standard daily household items in Victoria and your partner country – such as a TV, car, car registration, a litre of milk, a kilogram of beef, you can gain a better understanding of the cost of living in the two places. Use the exchange rate to convert prices into one currency so that direct comparisons may be made.

Island Living: Geography and Demography

Australia is an island continent made up of a number of states and territories. The two countries involved in your School2School relationship will more than likely have very different populations, ethnic make-up, terrain, coastlines and climates. Compare the geographic features of Victoria/Australia and your partner country – waterways, mountain ranges, deserts, national parks, forests and coastlines. A map of each country can be drawn and classes can plot these features, together with relevant cultural landmarks and climatic characteristics on each map. These maps can be turned into creative works of art and become an item of exchange between the two schools.

You can also think about:

- › Exchanging student writing about any topic, but start with something that is close to home and relevant to your students;
- › Creating home-made postcards or purchase them and send them to your partner school;
- › Developing a My School, My Country kit to which all your students contribute: writing, postcards, photos, drawings, CDs, magazines, newspapers which can be sent to your partner school;
- › Participating in treasure hunts, explorations online and offline including web quests, virtual field trips, or developing trivia quizzes on yours and your partner country;
- › Collaborating with your partner school to publish the writing developed by all the students. Encourage writing in different genres like poetry, narrative, informative, autobiographical and gather the writing together into an electronic or hard copy anthology. Give it a meaningful name and ask your students to provide artwork for the cover and inside the publication. Share copies with your partner school;
- › Posing authentic and challenging problems to the two student groups, these could be environmentally or politically-based or Commonwealth Games-themed and could take the form of a mystery which needs clues (which you and your partner colleague filter throughout a specific period of time) and an eventual answer or solution;
- › Researching your partner school's country using the internet and reference texts from the library. Contact travel agents and embassies for information. Create a knowledge wall in your classroom which highlights everything you are learning about your partner school's country and add new insights and understandings as the relationship develops further;
- › Creating a dedicated web page within your school's website that highlights the relationship between you and your partner school: your students can assist with the development and updating of the pages;
- › Developing a competition or adventure or share a 'mascot' between you! You may choose to get your own soft Karak toy and share it with your partner school, logging diary entries from each child as your partner students take Karak home and he visits their families and your partner school could provide you with a similar soft toy representation of an iconic creature in their country;
- › Matching your students with a buddy from your partner school and encourage them to develop a closer one-to-one relationship. Begin this by getting your students to send information about themselves and a range of questions to their buddy;
- › Coordinating a synchronous communication event.

Case studies



New Glasgow, Nova Scotia and Glen Iris, Victoria

Glen Iris Primary School (GIPS) has established a friendship with Scotsburn Elementary School, New Glasgow in Nova Scotia, Canada. A Student Management Team consisting of Grade 4s and 5s was established to run this project to ensure continuity into 2006. All senior grades will be encouraged to participate in sending material to Scotsburn using email. Any emails and pictures that are sent to Glen Iris will be prominently placed in display books and shared with the entire school community through school newsletters and assemblies. Scotsburn will be encouraged to explore the Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games website and make use of the available education materials and information. The project will be theme-based and can be modified according to the interests of the students who may discover interesting pathways they want to explore together:

- › October 2005: Who are we?
- › November 2005: Learning more about a Commonwealth country
- › December 2005: Celebrations
- › January 2005: Leisure Activities
- › February 2006: Sports
- › March 2006: Let the Games Begin

Above (left to right):

- 1. Where is New Glasgow, Nova Scotia? Year 5/6 students at Glen Iris Primary School.*
- 2. Jackson, Justin and Laura at Glen Iris Primary School*
- 3. Students at Scotsburn Elementary, New Glasgow, Nova Scotia Canada are developing a School2School friendship with students at Glen Iris Primary School in Victoria.*



Keilor Downs College joins School2School

A large secondary school in Melbourne's western suburbs, Keilor Downs College is ramping up for the Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games. The school has registered for the School2School and CG Reps Programs and is collaborating with their local primary school to plan and implement a Commonwealth Games Day for both campuses.

As School2School participants, Keilor Downs has been partnered up with a school in Uganda.

A dedicated team of teachers is working together to plan their approach, focusing on students in years 9 and 10 working with students in Year 7 and establishing a Student Management Team / CG Reps to assist them in making and sustaining contact with their partner school and other associated Commonwealth Games activities.

Left:

Students from Keilor Downs College will partner up with Lubiri Secondary School in Central Uganda.



Above (left to right):

1. Grade 5 students at Pleasant Street Primary School find out about India.
2. Alex, Luvuyo and Lachlan riding their bikes home from Pleasant Street Primary School.
3. School children dressed in traditional Hindustani and Punjabi dress perform cultural dances to welcome the Melbourne 2006 Queen's Baton to Noida Stadium, Noida, India. Copyright Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games Corporation. Photo: prpix.com.au
4. Indian cultural dancers entertain the crowds at Red Fort for the start of the Delhi leg of the Melbourne 2006 Queen's Baton Relay. Built for Mughal Emperor Shahjahan in 1648, the massive red sandstone building extends more than two kilometres in length and is the largest of Old Delhi's monuments. Copyright Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games Corporation. Photo: prpix.com.au

Pleasant Street Primary School: our story so far!

Pleasant Street Primary School has been teamed up with a school in New Delhi, India – the venue for the 2010 Commonwealth Games. The school has also linked in with their local Ballarat council's *Adopt A Second Team* initiative which is building a strong relationship with the athletes from India as well as some of the Indian performers who will attend the Melbourne 2006 closing ceremony.

To get started, the Grade 5 class compiled a book titled "A Day in the Life of a Pleasant Street Primary Student": a photographic and text record of a typical school day. The book starts at 8.00am with a student walking to school and continues on to show students at different stages in the day: at art, at play and classroom activities. At 3.30pm, the book explores typical after school activities: ballet; tennis; school sport. Finally, the book ends with students eating dinner, completing their homework and at bedtime. The final entry is at 10.00pm.

This booklet gave a 'snapshot' of the Pleasant Street Primary students' lives and introduced the students who are keen to develop an ongoing relationship with the school and the students in India. Minister Madden presented this book to Mr R K Gautam, Principal of Kendriya Vidyalaya, JNU Campus, New Delhi.

The Grade 5 students are now working on individual profiles that will be sent to the students in New Delhi to try and match them up and hopefully lead to the further sharing of emails, letters and stories.



Above (top to bottom):

- 1 The Shristi Group, Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- 2 Auburn South Primary School students at the CG06 launch.

Plan's School to School Case Study

Plan is the Goodwill Ambassador for the Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games. As part of Plan's Global Connections program, Australian school groups can connect with children in other countries, communicating with youth from around the world, nurturing global solidarity and allowing them to learn from and understand one another's ideas, cultures and beliefs.

Since June 2005, Auburn South Primary School in Melbourne and The Shristi (Creation) Group in Dhaka, Bangladesh have been exchanging emails, letters, photos and drawings discussing childhood: ambitions for the future; children's place in the community as well as issues of child labour; the differences between being economically poor and personally enriched; and respecting cultural differences. Auburn South has a DVD in production and has sought simple Bangla translations, through Plan, to communicate with The Shristi Group.

You can be involved in Plan's work through:

- › Plan's School to School Program can provide facilitated paths of communication between children in Commonwealth countries.
- › Join Children First! and make a monthly contribution to help provide essential healthcare, basic education and ensure every child has access to their basic rights.
- › Donate to a Project through a one-off donation or fundraising drive to help communities reduce exploitation and abuse of children, lessen the impact of HIV/AIDS, improve access to nutrition or improve a child's ability to do well at school.
- › Workplace Giving helps you and your work mates to bring lasting improvements in the quality of life of children in developing countries.
- › Get Involved in the Children's Week celebrations, Plan Children's Marathon, World AIDS Day activities, Games activities and special fundraising appeals or volunteer to help.
- › Become a Child Sponsor for just over \$1 per day to make a real difference to your sponsored child and their entire community.

For more information, go to www.plan.org.au

Plan has been appointed the Goodwill Partner for the Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games. Plan is one of many international development organisations that undertake projects in developing Commonwealth nations. Schools may wish to approach other international development organisations to assist in arranging partnerships or connections between schools.

After the Games

The benefits

Developing a friendship with a partner school in another country will help your students to grasp their place as a global citizen and to develop a deepened understanding of another culture in an authentic, relevant and personal way. The discussions that will emerge within your classroom will be filled with excited questions, new knowledge, revised knowledge and a keen desire to seek more answers.

Students who have been involved in international cross-cultural exchanges are stimulated by the relationships they develop and view the experience as positive and worthwhile. Establishing friendships with students of a similar age in another country is highly engaging and, at times, confronting. Your students will be enthusiastic ambassadors and may even continue the relationship with their buddy student beyond the time frame of this project.

This project and the use of ICT can open up any learning experience to the global community, dissipate the classroom walls and extend the audience for writing and communication beyond that of the teacher and the student's immediate peers. It can also help you and your students to refine and develop new ICT skills. The internet can be used as a resource, a vehicle for interactivity or an avenue of collaboration. The collaborative aspect empowers both students and teachers and challenges what they previously thought was possible. In the spirit of cooperation and cultural exchange, your role as the teacher may shift from being the traditional knowledge-bearer to a co-learner with your students. Much better at taking risks and questioning what can be done, your students will push the boundaries, assist in planning and implementation and develop competencies in negotiation, effective communication, problem solving and teamwork.



Above:
Senior students at St Mary's School Ascot Vale are partnering with St Mary's Elementary in Canada as part of the S2S program.



Above:
The Wala Ghanaian dancers visit St Thomas Primary School, Sale

Sustaining the relationship after the Games

The initial focus of your School2School friendship will undoubtedly be the Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games. If you have planned out your communication and negotiated expectations clearly with your partner colleague, you should be able to sustain your School2School friendship beyond March 2006. It might be useful, in the initial planning stages, to identify phases of the project and build in opportunities for reflection, negotiation and forward planning.

Phase 1 – getting to know each other

You may consider the lead up to the Games in March 2006 as an introductory communication phase with autobiographical, matching of students and Games-related themes helping to give shape to the communication.

Phase 2 – after the Games

If the relationship you are developing with your partner school is an energetic and productive one, no doubt you will want to continue it post-March 2006. Spend time discussing this and planning with your partner colleague. You could plan a schedule of theme-based communication sessions or projects over 3 months. Providing your class and your partner class with a focus will help to maintain enthusiasm and commitment. The international friendships of many teachers and schools can extend beyond six months and into years. This will be up to you. The collegial sharing that you develop with your partner colleague may easily translate into new ideas and new projects well into the future. It's up to you!



Websites and Links

If you would like to share your School2School experience with us, you can email us at school2school@edumail.vic.gov.au and your school may be promoted on the Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games Education website.

Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games Education Program
www.melbourne2006.com.au/education

Melbourne 2006
www.melbourne2006.com.au

Adopt A Second Team

You can find which Commonwealth nation your community is supporting at www.dvc.vic.gov.au/ocgc/getting%20involved/adopt.htm

Netiquette

Using the Internet by SOFWeb:
www.sofweb.vic.edu.au/internet/netiquet.htm

The Core Rules of Netiquette by Virginia Shea:
www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html

Safety

SOFWeb – Taking Care on the Internet
www.sofweb.vic.edu.au/internet/takecare.htm
www.sofweb.vic.edu.au/internet/childsaf.htm

Superhighway Safety
<http://safety.ngfl.gov.uk/parents/document.php3?D=d12>

The Australian Internet Safety Advisory Body
www.netalert.net.au

www.safekids.com is an outstanding website which offers activities for kids and advice to parents and teachers on safe Internet use.

Places to go to access networks, schools around the globe and online projects

Global Classroom Project

www.sofweb.vic.edu.au/gc

DE&T's Global Classroom Project has actively linked Victorian schools with schools around the globe in exciting curriculum-based projects for over 12 years. During this time, thousands of schools from Australia and around the world have participated in the range of online collaborative projects the Global Classroom has to offer. The Global Classroom Project offers teachers access to online collaborative projects covering all year levels, curriculum levels and skill levels; an opportunity to post their own project on the database and to place an 'ad' seeking partner schools; access to teaching and learning resources.

I*EARN – the International Education and Resource Network
www.iearn.org

Oz Projects
<http://ozprojects.edna.edu.au>

PLAN – Goodwill Sponsor for the Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games
www.plan.org.au

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Department of Education and Training

Office of Commonwealth Games Coordination

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