

Note on School Linking

Inter Faith Week may be a good time to introduce schools to explore identities and diversity through School Linking. [The Schools Linking Network](#) has six years' experience working with schools in the UK. The Network says:

On one level the idea of linking is really simple, but underneath there are layers and layers of history and geography, family and friendships, and the media which influence our attitudes and opinions to other people. The way we work in the Schools Linking Network aims to facilitate conversations and develop deeper awareness of our own identities and those of others.

The ultimate aim of course is that we will enjoy meeting and being with new people, people who we may perceive as very different or those who we may assume to be very much like us. Whichever is the case, it is always good to be prepared to be surprised!

If they are to be maximised, the rich opportunities for exploration require sound preparation and planning as well as commitment and support from schools' senior leadership. It is important that schools guard against presenting tokenistic efforts during Inter Faith Week by attempting too much too quickly. However, Inter Faith Week may be a good time:

- to showcase work on school linking already in hand and going well
- to launch the start of new school link; or,
- to 'feel the pulse' of relatively new school linking ventures.

[The National Gateway website](#) has been set up to facilitate links. Through the Gateway the SLN can help find a link school and, during the linking process, offer resources and professional development. They also provide:

- a free day of professional development for the lead teachers from each new school link.
- telephone and web-based support to respond to your questions and give you ideas.
- resources online and hard copy.

Additional support is available for Faith Schools who want to link through [Three Faith Forum's Shared Futures programme](#).