

# CONNECTING CLASSROOMS

**Strengthening professional development  
and international partnerships in  
South African and United Kingdom schools**



## Introduction

In September 2018, the British Council in partnership with the Department for International Development (DFID) launched a new phase of Connecting Classrooms.

The new Connecting Classrooms programme will run for three years in more than 30 countries worldwide, including the UK. During this time we will work with 60 000 teachers and school leaders, and support 4 750 schools to work in partnership.

Connecting Classrooms will continue to support and improve teaching and learning in both the UK and SA in the following key areas:

1. Professional development for teachers and school leaders
2. International school partnerships
3. Access to quality online classroom resources for teachers
4. Professional dialogue opportunities for policy makers to support national and regional educational priorities
5. Give young people the knowledge, skills and attitudes they need to make a positive contribution now and in the future. Young people will be better equipped to live and work in a global economy, and to support / take action to tackle global poverty and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

## In South Africa through quality engagement and partnerships with teachers, school leaders and policy makers, we are hoping to reach the following targets (2018-2021)

<b>Schools reached</b>	<b>2000</b>
<b>Teachers – Professional Development</b>	<b>500</b>
<b>School leaders – Professional Development</b>	<b>300</b>
<b>Policy makers engaged</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Schools accessing online services through the programme</b>	<b>500</b>
<b>Schools involved in partnerships (virtual/face-to-face)</b>	<b>350</b>

## What are we hoping to achieve?

### 1. **Enriching education and improving learner performance:**

Connecting Classrooms supports school systems globally through a range of professional development opportunities aimed at teachers and school leaders. The programme focuses on improving pedagogies and approaches around the key themes of core and transferable skills, school leadership and inclusive education, to enrich the learner experience and boost student performance. Connecting Classrooms introduces schools to the latest international practices and it gives policy makers direct access to UK expertise and advice on education policy approaches.

## 2. Giving young people/students the best chance to achieve:

Connecting Classrooms is about enhancing school systems to provide all young people with a quality education, enabling them to develop the knowledge and skills they need to achieve their goals.

## 3. Programme themes tailored to SA educational priorities:

- 3.1. **Core and transferable skills:** preparing young people for life and work by equipping them with the core skills, such as critical thinking, enterprise, citizenship and communication, in the classroom and teaching them how to apply these to thrive in today's world.
- 3.2. **School Leadership:** enhancing school leadership by strengthening the skills of leaders, supporting policy makers to develop and implement effective national school leadership approaches and facilitate collaborations and support change.
- 3.3. **Inclusive education:** Make the learning environment more inclusive by equipping teachers with skills and approaches to implement inclusive practices in the classroom and meet the needs of every learner.

## **4. What are we offering:**

### **4.1. Professional development for teachers and leaders**

Connecting Classrooms focusses on the latest international practices, enabling leaders and teachers to strengthen their knowledge and skills and to create an enriched learning experience for young people. The training courses are designed and developed for leaders and teachers, ensuring improvements and enhancements are embedded throughout every level of the school. These courses are delivered by a Connecting Classrooms global network of experienced professional facilitators.

### **4.2. Collaborations with schools in the UK and SA**

Through reciprocal and collaborative partnerships, teachers and leaders' professional development journeys are supported and it enables them to become part of an international community of practice. Teachers also have access to classroom resources that are designed to support joint projects with partner schools, thereby helping young people develop their core skills by collaborating and interacting with their peers across the UK.

### **4.3. Expert consultancy**

Through Connecting Classrooms, policy makers will have access to leading UK education experts, who provide consultancy and advice on various aspects of school systems, including curriculum development, school leader standards and inclusive education policy, all drawing on the latest international practices and research.

## Professional Development for Teachers

**Purpose:** To enable teachers to embed core and transferable skills into their teaching and learning pedagogy and empower them to create more inclusive classrooms.

### Core and Transferable Skills

### International Collaborations and Professional partnerships

#### Introductory Module (Compulsory)

Delivery of six core skills for Teachers

1. Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
2. Creativity and Imagination
3. Communication and Collaboration
4. Digital Literacy
5. Citizenship
6. Student Leadership

1 day (± 6 hours)  
face to face session

#### Core Skills Modules

1. Critical Thinking and Problem Solving (CTPS)
2. Inclusive Pedagogies (IP)  
**(Delivered face to face)**

Facilitated Workshops on CTPS and/or IP

2 days

School based project that embeds the learning from CTPS and/or IP courses

12 - 14 weeks

Face to face sharing, reflecting and reporting session

1 day

3. Digital Literacy  
13 hours online course  
<https://connecting-classrooms.britishcouncil.org/apply-for-funding>

#### Partnership Modules

1. Intercultural and Global Awareness
2. Appreciative Inquiry
3. Teacher as researcher

1 day (± 6 hours)  
face to face session

# Core Offers

## 1. Professional Development for Teachers

**Purpose:** To enable teachers to embed core and transferable skills into their teaching and learning pedagogy and empower them to create more inclusive classrooms.

### 1.1 Introduction to six core skills

(1 day) *Offer available immediately*

Introduction of the six core skills, identified as essential to the development of an individual's readiness to take on the challenges of today's globally interconnected world. The six core skills namely Critical Thinking and Problem Solving, Creativity and Imagination, Digital Literacy, Student Leadership, Communication and Collaboration and Citizenship

\* On completion of the one day course : 15 Professional development points (SACE endorsed)

### 1.2 Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

*Offer available immediately*

(2 days face to face + school project 12 to 14 weeks + 1 day face to face)

This course supports self-directed thinking with a view to produce new and innovative ideas and to solve problems. Reflecting critically on learning experiences and processes and making effective decisions.

\* On completion of the 3 day course : 15 Professional development points to be awarded (SACE endorsed)

### 1.3 Inclusive Pedagogies

*Offer available for teachers and leaders: immediately*

(2 days face to face + school project 12 to 14 weeks + 1 day face to face) –

This course aims to develop teachers' awareness of issues around inclusion and identity, support them to identify opportunities and strategies to develop inclusive ethos in school communities and carry out a school based project.

\* On completion of the 3 day course : 15 Professional development points to be awarded (SACE endorsed)

### 1.4 Digital Literacy

(13 hours online)

Digital technologies are increasingly pervading all aspects of our lives. As they do, it becomes increasingly important for individuals to not only understand how they might utilise technologies effectively but also to be able to critically evaluate the digital content they encounter and understand the purposes for which it has been developed.

\* On completion of the 13 hours online course : 15 Professional development points to be awarded (SACE endorsed)

## Professional Development for School Leaders

**Purpose:** To enable and empower school leaders to lead and manage teaching and learning more effectively in their schools. To enable and support leaders to create more inclusive schools.

### Core and Transferable Skills

#### Introductory Module (Compulsory)

Delivery of six core skills for Teachers

1. Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
2. Creativity and Imagination
3. Communication and Collaboration
4. Digital Literacy
5. Citizenship
6. Student Leadership

1 day (± 6 hours) face to face session

### School Leadership

#### School Leadership Modules

1. Leading Core Skills (LCS)
2. Introduction to Core Skills and Leadership Development (ICSLD)
3. Inclusive Pedagogies (IP)

**(Delivered face to face)**

Facilitated Workshops on LCS and/or ICSLD and/or IP

2 days

School based project that embeds the learning from LCS and/or ICSLD and/or IP courses

12 - 14 weeks

Face to face sharing, reflecting and reporting session

1 day

4. Instructional Leadership
- Implementation format as above plus 3 additional webinars.**

### International Collaborations and Professional partnerships

#### Partnership Modules

1. Intercultural and Global Awareness
2. Appreciative Inquiry
3. Teacher as researcher

1 day (± 6 hours) face to face session



## 2. Professional Development for School Leaders

<p><b>Purpose:</b> To enable and empower school leaders to lead and manage teaching and learning more effectively in their schools. To enable and support leaders to create more inclusive schools.</p>	
<p><b>2.1 Introduction to Six Core Skills</b>  <i>(Offer available immediately)</i> (1 day)</p> <p>Introduction to the six core skills, identified as essential to the development of an individual's readiness to take on the challenges of today's globally interconnected world. The six core skills namely Critical Thinking and Problem Solving, Creativity and Imagination, Digital Literacy, Student Leadership, Communication and Collaboration and Citizenship</p> <p>* On completion of the one day course : 15 Professional development points to be awarded (SACE endorsed)</p>	
<p><b>2.2 Leading Core Skills</b>  <i>(Offer available immediately)</i>            (2 days + school project + 1 day)</p> <p>This course will help leaders integrate and embed core skills across the curriculum and plan for this effectively.</p> <p>* On completion of the 3 day course : 15 Professional development points to be awarded (SACE endorsed)</p>	<p><b>2.4 Instructional Leadership</b>  <i>(Offer available from mid-2019)</i>            (2 days + school project 12 to 14 weeks + 3 webinars + 1 day)</p> <p>This course will support leaders to develop the skills needed to lead teaching and learning within their setting.</p> <p>* On completion of the 6 day course : 15 Professional development points to be awarded (SACE endorsed)</p>
<p><b>2.3 Introduction to Core Skills and Leadership Development</b>  <i>(Offer available from 2020)</i> (2 days + school project + 1 day)</p> <p>This course will introduce leaders to the concept of core skills and why they are important, and equip them with the leadership skills to lead change in their school</p> <p>* On completion of the 3 day course : 15 Professional development points to be awarded (SACE endorsed)</p>	<p><b>2.5 Inclusive Pedagogies</b>  <i>(Offer available for teachers and leaders)</i>            (2 days face to face + school project 12 to 14 weeks + 1 day face to face)</p> <p>This course aims to develop teachers' awareness of issues around inclusion and identity, support them to identify opportunities and strategies to develop inclusive ethos in school communities and carry out a school based project</p> <p>* On completion of the 3 day course : 15 Professional development points to be awarded (SACE endorsed)</p>

**International Collaboration and Professional Partnerships with the UK schools focused on Core and Transferable Skills and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)**

**Type of Partnerships**

**Reciprocal School Partnerships**

**Virtual Partnerships**

**One to one Partnerships**

Face to face collaboration between a UK and South African school.

Travel grant of £1,500 (<https://connecting-classrooms.britishcouncil.org/apply-for-funding>)

**Cluster Partnerships**

A group of UK schools and schools from South Africa.

Minimum two schools from South Africa in the cluster.

Travel grant of £5,000 to £35,000

**Online Partnerships**

A unique opportunity to work and learn with a school from another country and culture using different forms of technology and communication tools.

No Travel grant

### 3. International Collaboration and Professional Partnerships

**Purpose:** To share effective practice and develop together through online and, where possible, face-to-face engagements.

**Overview:** Connecting Classrooms through Global Learning is intended to:

- Improve teachers’ pedagogical skills, especially their ability to incorporate transferable skills into their curriculum teaching.
- Give young people in both the UK and overseas countries an opportunity to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes to live and work in a global economy.

Raise awareness of global issues amongst young people by supporting their collaboration with their international peers.

One day course on Intercultural and Global Awareness Module (Appreciative Inquiry and Equitable Partnerships) and Teacher as a researcher

(1 day) *Offer available immediately*

\* On completion of the one day course : Professional development points (tbc)

#### 3.1 Types of Partnerships

##### 3.1.1 Reciprocal School Partnerships

**3.1.1.1. One to One Partnerships** – This entails a face to face collaboration between a UK and South African school. We offer a travel grant of £1,500 per school in the partnership to cover cost associated with the reciprocal visit – travel, accommodation, subsistence, visa, vaccinations and a single trip travel insurance. <https://connecting-classrooms.britishcouncil.org/apply-for-funding>

**3.1.1.2. Cluster Partnerships** – A cluster is a group of UK schools and schools from South Africa working together. As a minimum there must be two schools from South Africa in the cluster. The cluster’s collaboration can focus on a variety of themes, one of which has to be common to the whole cluster.

A cluster can include a mix of primary and secondary schools, with no limit to the upper number of schools taking part, as long as it is manageable for the lead school to coordinate from the UK.

We offer a menu of funding available for clusters to apply for between £5,000 up to a maximum of £35,000 per application, depending on the number of schools involved and the type and scale of activities. Schools have the flexibility to use these funds in a way that they believe will achieve their priorities and best impact for their projects. (<https://connecting-classrooms.britishcouncil.org/apply-for-funding>)

##### 3.1.2. Virtual Partnerships

Connecting Classrooms Virtual Partnerships offer teachers and pupils a unique opportunity to work and learn with a school from another country and culture using different forms of technology and communication tools.

Virtual Partnerships resources are designed around themes connected to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, and include interactive challenges which schools can complete together, sharing thoughts and outcomes on social media (no funding grants).

#### 4. Partnership with the Department of Basic Education and the Provincial Education Departments

<b>Purpose:</b> Contribute to the achievement of quality education in South Africa by aligning the Connecting Classrooms offer to DBE and Provincial Education Departments priorities, with an emphasis on Teacher Development and Inclusive Education.	
<b>Type of Engagement</b> Policy Dialogues Events and Activities Mutually beneficial scoping visits to and from the UK Use of System Level Audit Tools (i.e. Inclusion Audit, Curriculum mapping of core skills and School Leadership Audit)	<b>Action Plan</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- <b>One day seminars:</b> Inclusive pedagogies / education &amp; Connecting Classrooms launch</li><li>- <b>System Level Audit Tools</b> i.e. Inclusion Audit, Curriculum mapping of core skills and School Leadership Audit</li><li>- <b>Study/scoping visits to the UK</b> and attendance to international conferences and participation in local conferences</li><li>- <b>Assessment systems</b> for embedding core and transferable skills in the classroom and creation of inclusive classrooms</li></ul>

<https://connecting-classrooms.britishcouncil.org>

The British Council is the United Kingdom's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities.