

[Press release: Alun Cairns calls on Welsh schools to sign up to new UK aid backed programme to connect schools with African, Asian and Middle Eastern classrooms](#)

Welsh Secretary Alun Cairns will visit Heronsbridge School in Bridgend later today (Monday 12 November) to encourage more schools in Wales to sign up to the UK aid backed [Connecting Classrooms through Global Learning programme](#), which launched in England in September.

The scheme, which is co-funded by The Department for International Development (DFID) and the British Council, unites pupils in the UK with school children around the world to build friendships and increase awareness and understanding of global issues.

The programme aims to connect more than three million primary and secondary school pupils in the UK with schools in countries across Africa, Asia and the Middle East. It will also train 60,000 teachers and school leaders in the UK and developing countries to equip pupils with the knowledge and skills to live and work in a global economy.

Heronsbridge is one of a growing number of Welsh schools already taking part in the programme, and has existing links to schools in Tanzania where teachers and pupils regularly take part in exchanges and share work on topics including culture, rights and responsibilities and the environment.

Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns said:

The UK Government Connecting Classrooms through Global Learning programme is a valuable way for children here in Wales to gain a broader view of the world at an early age, learning more about the issues affecting countries in all corners of the globe. It is also an opportunity for schools around the world to benefit from the support and knowledge of British teachers.

I urge primary schools and secondary schools across Wales to sign up to take part in such a meaningful scheme operating in a vast global network.

The Connecting Classrooms through Global Learning programme is part of an initiative that introduces the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals to students and teachers in the UK and around the world. The Goals are designed to deliver a more sustainable future for all and include tackling hunger,

providing clean water and affordable clean energy. Research has shown that 'school linking' can increase the quality of teaching and learning in the schools involved, improving both pupil engagement and teacher motivation.

International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt said:

The Connecting Classrooms through Global Learning programme is a win for the UK and a win for the developing world.

The programme will build deep and meaningful partnerships between schools and communities in the UK and countries all over the world.

I have already heard heart-warming stories of how children taking part have come to realise just how much they have in common, and how much they have learned from each other, building lasting friendships.

Director of British Council Wales, Jenny Scott, said:

Connecting Classrooms through Global Learning provides young people with an opportunity to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to thrive in an increasingly global society. The partnership between Heronsbridge School and schools in Africa shows the huge impact these connections can have on pupils, teachers and the local community. We hope schools across Wales will sign up to take part.

[Press release: Foreign Secretary travels to the Gulf to push for end to Yemen bloodshed](#)

In the Gulf he will meet King Salman of Saudi Arabia, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman of Saudi Arabia, Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan of Abu Dhabi, Saudi Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir, United Arab Emirates Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Yemeni Vice President Ali Mohsen and Yemeni Foreign Minister Khaled Al Yamani. The Foreign Secretary is seeking to build support among international, and particularly regional, partners for new action in the UN Security Council to bolster the UN-led peace process, following his meeting with UN Special Envoy for Yemen Martin Griffiths at the end of October.

The Foreign Secretary will be the first UK Minister to visit Saudi Arabia since the murder of Jamal Khashoggi one month ago. He will use his meetings to make clear the importance of Saudi Arabia cooperating with Turkey to conduct a full and credible investigation into Mr Khashoggi's death. This will build on talks that the Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Simon McDonald, also had this weekend in Saudi Arabia with King Salman of Saudi Arabia and Saudi Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir.

While in the UAE the Foreign Secretary will also raise the ongoing consular case of Matthew Hedges.

Speaking ahead of his visit Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt said:

The human cost of war in Yemen is incalculable: with millions displaced, famine and disease rife and years of bloodshed, the only solution is now a political decision to set aside arms and pursue peace. Britain has a unique position, both as pen-holder at the UN Security Council and as a key influencer in the region, so today I am travelling to the Gulf to demand that all sides commit to this process.

We are witnessing a man-made humanitarian catastrophe on our watch: now is the window to make a difference, and to get behind both the UN peace process and current UK efforts in the Security Council.

In addition, he will call on the Saudi authorities to do more to deliver justice and accountability for the Khashoggi family:

The international community remain united in horror and outrage at the brutal murder of Jamal Khashoggi one month ago. It is clearly unacceptable that the full circumstances behind his murder still remain unclear. We encourage the Saudi authorities to co-operate fully with the Turkish investigation into his death, so that we deliver justice for his family and the watching world.

Further information

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backed programme to connect schools with African, Asian and Middle Eastern classrooms

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Further information

- Follow the Foreign Secretary on Twitter [@Jeremy_Hunt](#) and [Facebook](#)
- Follow the Foreign Office on Twitter [@foreignoffice](#) and [Facebook](#)
- Follow the Foreign Office on [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#) and [LinkedIn](#)

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Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt will visit Saudi Arabia and the UAE today [Monday 12 November] to press for an end to the bloodshed in Yemen.