

[News story: David Mundell calls on Scottish schools to sign up to UK Aid backed programme](#)

Scottish Secretary David Mundell visited Towerbank Primary School in Portobello, Edinburgh, today to encourage schools in Scotland to sign up to the UK aid backed [Connecting Classrooms through Global Learning](#) programme.

The scheme, co-funded by the UK Government's 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 those 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.

Towerbank is one of a growing number of Scottish 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 Scotland David Mundell said:

It was fantastic to visit Towerbank Primary School and hear about their connection with Msufini Primary School in Tanzania.

Programmes like the UK Government-backed Connecting Classrooms allow children in Scotland and across the UK to interact with children all over the world, helping them to understand each other and the issues we face better.

It is also a great opportunity for children around the world to hear about life in Scotland and together with their Scottish peers develop the skills needed to help deliver a more sustainable planet in the future. I urge primary schools and secondary schools across Scotland 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.

Lucy Young, Acting Deputy Director, British Council Scotland, said:

The Connecting Classrooms through Global Learning programme enables learners in Scotland to build connections with and learn from their international peers. It also helps teachers to equip pupils with the knowledge, skills and attitudes they need to meet the challenges of our increasingly complex, interconnected and global world.

The excellent work done to date by Towerbank Primary School in Edinburgh with its partner schools in Tanzania is a powerful example of how effective this programme can be. I hope their success will inspire schools all over Scotland to sign up.