



EMPOWERING NEWCASTLE'S YOUTH FOR A GLOBAL FUTURE

Sharing our partnership approach and benefits of supporting internationalism, languages and intercultural awareness in Newcastle schools and colleges.



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In our vibrant, diverse city, we are nurturing the next generation of confident, global citizens.

With over 150 languages spoken and a rich tapestry of cultural backgrounds, our schools and colleges are a melting pot of potential. This dynamic mix brings both challenges and opportunities.

Many children and young people face significant economic and social barriers, impacting their education and future life chances. Our schools and colleges are committed to maximising their potential and our collaborative approach to internationalism supports this.

International Newcastle and Newcastle City Council (School Effectiveness) work in partnership with local, regional, national, and international allies to connect schools and colleges to opportunities to nurture the confidence, skills and future opportunities of the city's children and young people and prepare them for life in an increasingly interconnected world.

We actively facilitate school involvement in activities that broaden horizons, enhance employability, and foster cultural awareness. We broker international schools' links, support language teaching and learning and connect them to intercultural experiences.

Our research with teachers, children and parents underscores the profound impact of these experiences. They elevate aspirations, broaden perspectives, build skills and boost resilience, empowering our young generation to take confident strides towards a brighter future.

Find out more about our work supporting internationalism and the impact on Newcastle schools and children and young people and international case studies from five of our primary schools.



Benefits of internationalism

Internationalism is our focus. We support Newcastle schools with international connections, intercultural awareness and language skills, because these are essential for children and young people to thrive in a globally connected world. Their engagement supports personal development, builds skills and broadens and future education and career opportunities. It opens doors to a wide range of experiences and positions children and young people to be active, informed, and effective contributors to a more interconnected and harmonious world.



Global Competence

Helps young people navigate a world where interactions, both personal and professional, often span international boundaries and provides a framework for understanding diverse perspectives and cultures.



Enhanced Communication Skills

Proficiency in multiple languages improves overall communication abilities, both verbally and non-verbally and enables them to engage effectively with a wide range of people, regardless of language or cultural differences.



Competitive Advantage

Language skills and intercultural awareness are assets in the jobs market, equipping young people to work effectively in diverse teams and increasing employability and future career opportunities.



Cultural Understanding

Cultivates empathy and fosters an appreciation for the similarities and differences among people, to value and respect diversity in a multicultural society, fostering social cohesion, enriched by an understanding of various cultural backgrounds.



Education

Engaging with diverse perspectives and experiencing this through virtual working and international visits stimulates creativity and innovation, preparing young people for complex problem-solving, as well as boosting aspirations and ambitions for the future.



Personal Growth

Encounters with different cultures leads to personal development, builds lasting friendships, broadens their worldview and nurtures adaptability, an essential skill in a rapidly changing world.



Peace and Harmony





Cross-cultural understanding helps prevent misunderstandings and conflicts rooted in cultural differences and fosters a sense of global citizenship and shared responsibility for the well-being of the planet.



Environmental and Social Challenges

Facilitates international cooperation in addressing pressing issues like climate change, poverty, and health crises and empowers them to contribute meaningfully to local and global solutions.

Our impact and reach

 Travel	 Partnerships	 Languages	 Festival
£1m Turing Scheme School Awards 2020-23	60 New School international partnerships 2020-23	170 language teachers in our Modern Foreign Languages Networks	51,532 children and young people participating in our NE Festival of Languages 2021-2023
25 school international visits 2022-24	6 strategic partnerships: France, Spain, Germany, India, Holland, China, plus Italy, UAE	Continuing Professional Development: 120 primary teachers, 50 secondary	237 (2021), 381 (2022) and 521 (2023) schools participating
800+ children, 125 staff travelling Europe, Middle East South Asia	Virtual collaboration, joint projects	Levering resources and building skills for language teaching	427 free live events and activity sessions
Dramatic impact on staff, children, families	Cross curricular activities	Partnership of 40+ local, regional and national language experts and collaborators	Universities, national cultural organisations, language providers and networks



Newcastle City of Languages

We support language teaching, learning and take up in Newcastle schools to develop skills for the future and widen opportunities for children and young people. We also facilitate and promote activities celebrating languages, diverse cultures and our international connections.

Language learning can increase attainment across all subjects, widen perspectives, promote flexible ways of thinking and increase understanding of other cultures. It boosts interpersonal, communications and employability skills and improves future education, career and life choices. Language take-up has been falling across the UK for years, despite the increasing need for more people in the labour market with languages, intercultural awareness and strong communications skills. We want to reverse that trend.

Following extensive consultation, we launched Newcastle City of Languages in January 2020 as a collaborative approach to supporting and promoting language teaching and learning. We refreshed our strategy and goals in 2023 and are actively pursuing activities to progress all of these.

Our languages goals

- Support the improvement of language teaching at all levels in our schools
- Increase Modern Foreign Language learning and uptake (GCSE and A Level)
- Support international links to enhance languages teaching and learning
- Increase languages and careers activities for schools and pupils
- Celebrate and promote qualifications in Home, Heritage and Community Languages
- Increase university links to schools to widen participation and progression
- Increase engagement in Express Yourself: North East Festival of Languages
- Profile Newcastle City of Languages and attract investment, resources and support for schools



Making progress

Partnership: We have built an active partnership of local, regional and national partners, Embassies and cultural institutions working with us to support language teaching and learning in Newcastle

Competitions: We promote regional and national language competitions throughout the year

Teacher networks: We set up and support Primary and Secondary Modern Foreign Languages Subject Networks, engaging teachers, sharing learning and opportunities, understanding and addressing needs

CPD and resources: We are widening access to Continuing Professional Development and language teaching and learning resources and expertise

International links: We actively promote international connections to support language teaching and learning, especially in countries where the languages being taught in schools are spoken

Languages and careers: We have introduced and are increasing activities around languages and careers to improve take up, linked to future education, skills and careers opportunities

Fun activities: We are promoting and celebrating diverse languages and cultures, bringing fun and generating enthusiasm about language learning through our annual Festival of Languages

Data and evidence: We are tracking language take-up and attainment to understand and address trends and issues

[VISIT WEBSITE](#) Newcastle City of Languages



Express Yourself: North East Festival of Languages

Express Yourself: North East Festival of Languages has become a popular annual fixture since 2021. We host and co-ordinate the Festival, working with partners locally, regionally and nationally to provide free events, activities and resources celebrating diverse languages and cultures and our connections to the world.

Originally developed as a response to the lack of language provision during the pandemic, it has grown to provide a wide range of online and in person activities for children and young people, schools and communities to have fun, try new things and be inspired to learn more about diverse languages and cultures.

We have large scale participatory projects open from January to March, including:

- A **Festival Song** in many languages with resources and support for schools to sing, sign and play it and record themselves as part of a regional virtual performance.
- **Mother Tongue Other Tongue** children's poetic writing in languages they are learning or speak at home or in their community, with a digital anthology produced annually sharing a range of entries
- **An art project** incorporating different languages, which changes annually

Live events in March include:

- A wide range of **language and culture taster sessions** for primary schools and language workshops for secondary schools, online and on campus with Newcastle, Northumbria and Durham Universities
- Languages and careers **webinars and workshops**
- **Pre-recorded activities** for early years and young learners at school or at home

We also share freely available language and cultural resources, games and challenges.

Participation of children and young people through schools and groups has increased each year, from 11,955 in 2021 to 21,532 in 2023. 237 schools took part in 2021, increasing to 521 in 2023.

We have responded to the demand for more in person activities across the region and are introducing a range of World Culture Days, as well as more on campus events and languages and careers activities to promote language take up and progression.

[VISIT WEBSITE](#) expressyourselfne.com

Internationalism in the City

Newcastle is home to a diverse range of communities and cultures, with many different languages. We support activities to increase intercultural awareness and engagement, promote social cohesion, inclusion and the celebration of cultural diversity in the city. This includes activities in our schools.



Our internationalism goals

- Newcastle is a safe, tolerant, welcoming place
- We enable and facilitate opportunities for cultures to understand each other, celebrate their diversity and difference and be accessible
- We are well networked to support internationalism within our schools and provide links to culturally diverse local communities and organisations
- We empower children and young people make a difference on local and global issues
- We support all Newcastle schools to become Schools of Sanctuary

Making progress

Community connections: We are promoting intercultural dialogue and awareness raising by engaging with partners and communities in the city, including connecting schools to different cultural communities

Publicity: We publicize partners' events and activities, ambitions and achievements around cultural diversity and awareness

Campaigns: We promote opportunities for schools to be involved in national and international awareness raising campaigns, as well as local festivals and events celebrating different and diverse cultures

Celebrating languages: We use our annual Festival of Languages to engage, celebrate and profile our diverse language and cultural communities

Schools of Sanctuary: We support Newcastle Schools of Sanctuary, promote involvement in the training programme and awards process to create a welcoming environment, as well as engaging with the regional and national Schools of Sanctuary network

A School of Sanctuary

- Is a place of welcome for all
- Educates about why people are forcibly displaced
- Recognises that the UK is enriched by new arrivals
- Supports pupils from all backgrounds to feel seen, supported and included

Newcastle City Council (School Effectiveness team) is part of the team that runs the Schools of Sanctuary programme, alongside Newcastle City of Sanctuary and Educational Psychology Service. This programme has seen 19 schools in the city being awarded Sanctuary status by 2023.

The programme engages with and supports schools achieve the School of Sanctuary award, through a programme of training, drop ins and one to one sessions.

Work of the existing schools of sanctuary as well as those working towards their awards have includes: adapting their curriculum to include themes relating to refugees and forced displacement, having relevant books and resources available to children and staff around sanctuary issues and human rights; engaging in Newcastle City of Sanctuary training module and building in learning about refugees and asylum seekers into staff inductions and ongoing training. Schools are also set up schemes, such as EAL buddies for new arrivals who have English as an Additional Language, Language of the Month and Parent English Classes.

[VISIT WEBSITE](#) Internationalism in the City



Connecting internationally

Brokering international connections for Newcastle's schools and colleges and supporting international partnerships to benefit children and young people.

Our collaborative approach with schools and colleges has been successful in widening access to international experiences for Newcastle's children and young people, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Encouraging, developing and nurturing meaningful and lasting international connections enables educators and students to thrive in virtual collaborations, while hundreds have undergone transformative experiences through visits abroad.

International partnership goals

- All Newcastle schools and colleges have an active international partnership
- Schools seek accreditation through British Council's International School Award
- Schools are supported to undertake international visits to their partners
- We build on our strategic international links with cities abroad to foster more connections
- Schools generate benefits across the curriculum, boost language learning, academic and employability skills
- Pupils increase aspirations and skills and have access and opportunities for progression

How we support international partnerships

- Facilitating workshops with experts and teachers' sharing learning and approaches
- Providing support to individual or groups of schools with international partnerships
- Helping with applications for funding to support international links and visits
- Advocating integration of international perspectives across the curriculum to maximize benefits for all students and involvement in British Council's International School Award
- Facilitating engagement in additional activities around languages and cultures and broker links to local international communities to enrich their experiences

Making progress

60 international partnerships established or in development and more schools showing interest in developing links

Language learning boost: 40+ links with Nancy (France) and Aragon (Spain), strengthening interest and engagement in the main languages taught in our schools

Expanding horizons: New links and partnerships with India, Dubai, Italy, Germany, Turkey and The Netherlands and interest in exploring other worldwide connections

Whole school commitment: Schools are adopting a strategic approach to embed internationalism across the curriculum and maximise benefits for all their pupils

Year-Round Virtual Collaboration: Pupils and educators engage in year-round virtual collaborations encompassing languages, global citizenship, culture, environment, heritage, history, faith and other subjects

International visits: Supporting schools to apply to the UK Government Turing Scheme, giving staff and children the opportunity to visit their international partners

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25 successful Turing Scheme applications: Raising over £1m for schools' international visits in 2022-2024, with ongoing support for partnerships and planning throughout the year

Inclusivity at the core: 800+ children travelling abroad, removing barriers and widening access and opportunities for disadvantaged pupils and those with additional needs

Strengthening partnerships: Building on virtual collaboration and correspondence, these visits boost the relationships between educational institutions and staff

Transforming futures: Profound impact on students, nurturing confidence, skills and raising aspirations, as well as broadening horizons and perspectives

Empowering educators: by developing their experience, skills and confidence to cultivate more international links and facilitate travel by children and young people abroad

[VISIT WEBSITE](#) Connecting internationally

International case studies: Newcastle primary schools

In 2022, we supported Newcastle schools to secure over £200,000 Turing Scheme funding to travel abroad to their partner schools in summer 2023 and five of those are subjects of case studies. There was remarkable commonality in the insights and feedback from teachers, parents and pupils summarised overleaf. We supported all of these schools and others in 2023 to access £500,000 funding for more immersive international visits in 2024. These schools have increased their ambitions and we are supporting them to develop more international links to expand opportunities for children and young people in the city.

A strategic approach to links

In 2023, three of our primary schools visited Newcastle's twin city of Nancy, Wingrove, Benton Park and St Paul's, who took part in our research for case studies. We have built over 25 school partnerships with Nancy, supported by our counterparts in DAREIC, the international relations body supporting schools in France. We also have strategic links with Gelsenkirchen, our twin town in Germany (with new partnerships underway), the region of Aragon in Spain (where we have 17 links) and in India, where we have brokered new school partnerships and more are being developed.

We are expanding connections to the Netherlands, where a number of schools have been linking around cycling and sustainability and are developing more strategic links with other countries, such as Bangladesh and Pakistan.

Having broader connections with education and civic authorities abroad provides a wider network of support for schools visiting. Layering the links and having multiple partnerships in the same cities, also helps schools learn from each other and improve the experiences for teachers and pupils.

Our schools also develop their own links, including Rome, with special interest for Catholic faith schools. Our Lady and St Anne's is one of our case studies. Tyneview Primary, another case study, established a link with Istanbul. Another school made a link with Dubai. In these cases, schools want to enable pupils to experience Muslim countries, cultures and languages, something of particular interest due to the prevalence of students with Muslim heritage in our schools.

Layering the links and having multiple partnerships in the same cities, also helps schools learn from each other and improve the experiences for teachers and pupils...



Case studies: The transformative impacts of international visits

In 2023, we interviewed and surveyed teachers, pupils and parents in five Newcastle primary schools that we had supported to access Turing Scheme funding for visits abroad and produced individual case studies, included in this document. There was commonality across the feedback which is summarised below.

Insights from teachers

A cultural epiphany: Teachers gained a broader understanding of diverse cultures, empowering them continue to develop a more inclusive educational environment

Enhancing professional and curriculum development: Exposure to new techniques and educational practices and integrating fresh content and teaching methods in their own schools

Strengthened interpersonal bonds: Stronger relationships both with overseas colleagues, enhancing partnerships and with their own pupils through immersive international experiences

Fostering confidence and aspiration: Pupils exhibited significant growth in confidence, resilience, self-reliance and aspirations, beyond expectations

Inspiring global perspectives: The ability to share global perspectives and experiences inspired pupils on the visit and across the school, cultivating curiosity and a broader worldview

Empowered language skills: Teachers not only improved their language proficiency, but also found renewed passion in teaching languages to their pupils

Feedback from parents and carers

Life-changing experiences: International visits were described as life-altering, exceeding both the children's and parents' expectations

Overcoming apprehensions: Initial anxieties were dispelled through proactive guidance, support, and communication from teachers, both before and after the visits

Positive transformations: Children demonstrated increased confidence, responsibility, independence, sociability, and a heightened interest in other countries, cultures, and languages

Children's experiences

Anticipation and support: Prior to visits, children were excited and nervous, but support from staff, friends, and parents provided them with a sense of safety and contentment

Building connections: Collaborating with partner schools beforehand helped establish meaningful relationships with pupils and bolstered their confidence

Embracing new experiences: Pupils relished making new friends, exploring partner schools, and immersing themselves in different cultures

Embracing diversity: They enjoyed immersing themselves in new places, languages and cuisines and appreciated the similarities and difference between their own and their partner countries

Heartfelt welcome: The warm reception they received is an experience they will forever cherish

Boosting confidence and independence: Travelling abroad and being away from parents/carers had a profound impact on their confidence and independence

Cherished moments: They loved in spending quality time with friends and relished their stay in hotels and the experience of international travel on planes, trains, buses and boats

A hunger for more: Many children expressed a desire for further international travel, driven by a thirst for understanding other cultures, languages, perspectives and different ways of life

Broadening horizons and enriching education through international links:

Wingrove Primary School, Newcastle



Wingrove Primary, in the West End of Newcastle celebrates its culturally diverse school community. 87% of pupils have English as an Additional Language, 27 languages are spoken in the school, with many pupils from Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Eastern European heritage. The school is in an area of multiple deprivation, with a majority of children eligible for Free School Meals and Pupil Premium. Wingrove promotes high, attainable standards and fosters a positive environment for all pupils.

Embedding internationalism and embracing diversity

Wingrove Primary takes a whole school approach and is working towards British Council's International School Award, to embed internationalism across the curriculum. As a School of Sanctuary, they also create a welcoming environment for all pupils, including those from Refugee and Asylum-seeking backgrounds.

Wingrove are enhancing their active partnership with Nancy in France through visits and developing a further Turing funded cycling project to the Netherlands for 2024. They will be sharing their Forest School experience with schools in both countries and learning about sustainability. They are also interested in developing a link with a Muslim country to help the whole school explore the language, heritage and culture of many of their pupils.

Wingrove has a strong focus on Modern Foreign Languages (French and Spanish) and their French link has benefitted teachers and pupils, who work virtually, with the added value of visiting France to inspire teaching and real-world provide context to embed learning across the curriculum. They also introduce a different language and culture every month to the school to broaden horizons and embrace the diversity of different heritage and cultural backgrounds in the school.

Visit to Nancy, France in 2023

Wingrove continues to build their strong French partnership with Ecole Primaire de 5 Fontaines in Nancy, which they visited in 2022 and 2023 and will again in 2024.

Advance preparation for the visit in 2023 was key to their success. This included a staff pre-visit to Nancy. They visited the school, met the teachers, identified accommodation and sites of interest, prepared risk assessments and safeguarding information and developed itineraries for the visit. They made videos to share with children, parents and carers to show them where they were going and what they would be doing. This helped to build awareness and recruit pupils to participate, giving families confidence to let them go abroad without them, something that can be a significant challenge. They made information available in different languages, to promote understanding.



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case study

They also worked virtually through the year with their French partner school to build relationships and inspire confidence in the pupils. Staff did briefings and updates for pupils and parents and kept in constant communication, before, during and after the visit, which helped alleviate any concerns from families.

Turing funding supported the travel, accommodation and subsistence, as well as additional costs, such as buying luggage and clothing with their school's name and trip year on, passports and visas and anything else the children needed to be able to participate and remove financial barriers. Without this funding, they would not have been able to take part.

The experience and impact for teachers and pupils who visited in 2023 was extraordinary.

"The biggest impact is the growth in independence and resilience of the children... it has given them an experience they would never have had. They came back buzzing! For staff it was exhausting, but exhilarating and so rewarding."

Jane Mullarkey, Head Teacher

Children interviewed and surveyed had life-enhancing experiences, which changed how they viewed the world and what they could achieve in future. Most were amazed about how their own confidence, self-reliance and independence grew. Feedback from parents reflected this dynamic change in their children.

Children relished exploring the city and were impressed with the art museum and the Art Nouveau architecture, as well as trying different foods. They enjoyed attending their partner school and were intrigued by the differences between the schools - non-uniform, long lunches and less supervision compared to their own school. Children who were Arabic speakers from Wingrove found a commonality with Arabic speakers in Nancy, who helped them understand French.

Most significantly, children loved being with their friends abroad, staying in hotels and making new French friends, so much so that many were sad to leave them. When they returned, they shared their experiences with the whole school to inspire others.

All children received a photobook of their visit to Nancy

As they leave Year 6 and go to different secondary schools in Newcastle, they have memories to treasure and aspirations to see more of the world and embrace languages, different cultures and ways of life.



From Local to Global: cultivating international perspectives and transformative experiences Tyneview Primary School, Newcastle



Tyneview Primary is an inner-city school with significant levels of deprivation and where pupils face a range of different challenges. The school aims to provide all pupils and families with a wide range of opportunity through the curriculum, the wider offer and engagement with local and international communities.

Having engaged in international partnership briefings with International Newcastle and Newcastle City Council (School Effectiveness) and with their support, Tyneview felt confident to proceed with a long-held ambition to develop links with schools abroad. They are now committed to providing collaborative, international and intercultural experiences through long-term partnerships with schools in Istanbul and Rome, as part of a whole school approach to internationalism.

Their ambition is to enable pupils, in particular those from underrepresented groups and disadvantaged backgrounds, to become confident, global citizens and benefit from the life-changing experiences and the educational and development opportunities that international connections and visits can bring.

Tyneview's first international partnership was with Istanbul, chosen to enable pupils to experience a Muslim culture and travel to an important global city. They developed a relationship with their partner school, Bilim Koleji virtually over 12 months. With support from International Newcastle and the Council, Tyneview accessed Turing Scheme funding

to visit in summer 2023. Following the success of this partnership, they developed another partnership with Rome and accessed funding to visit in 2024.

This trio of cities are linked via the Roman Empire: Newcastle marking the end of the eastern Empire with Hadrian's Wall; Istanbul (Constantinople) as the former capital of the Roman Empire; and Rome as its centre. As well as this strategic historic context, Tyneview has been forging links with their local Turkish community and celebrated Turkish culture in school since 2022 and is developing relationships with the local Italian community. These relationships add value to their curriculum, bringing modern day perspectives, as well as languages, faiths and traditions, building awareness, positive dialogue and connection for staff and pupils. Tyneview has also changed their curriculum to learn more about other faiths and traditions to build understanding and intercultural awareness to reflect the increasing diversity in their school and Newcastle.

Visit to Istanbul 2023

Staff undertook a pre-visit to prepare for the trip, meeting their partner school, researching accommodation, travel and itineraries and undertaking risk assessments. This enabled them to inform and prepare families and children for the visit. Many Tyneview children have never been abroad or on holiday and many were from disadvantaged



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backgrounds or had additional needs. Pupils had lessons on travel, what to expect, as well as trying Turkish food at a local restaurant and learning about cultural etiquette. They participated in workshops run by local Turkish people and The Dialogue Society. Additional support was put in place throughout the year for pupils.

A year of building relationships with their partner school, Bilim Koleji in Istanbul, culminated in a 5-day visit to Turkey in May 2023. For many children, it was their first-time leaving Newcastle and they enjoyed the adventure of travelling by train, plane and boat. They explored the city with a guide, visiting famous heritage sites, mosques and the football stadium and experienced Turkish hospitality, food and culture. The group were warmly welcomed by their partner school, Bilim Koleji and appreciated the buddy scheme partnering them with Turkish pupils. They spent time learning Turkish, playing football, having picnics, sharing experiences and sailed down the Bosphorous, making new friends, who are now pen friends.

Parents said that it was an incredible experience and the funding enabled their children to participate in a life-changing opportunity, that they would never have been able to afford otherwise. They were updated every day on Class Dojo and enjoyed seeing photos of their children enjoying their time in Turkey. They could see the improved confidence, self-reliance and independence in their children.

Building on success

In 2024, Tyneview will welcome staff and pupils from their Turkish partner school to Newcastle. Tyneview will also be visiting Rome with pupils and staff, as their international ambitions continue to be realised.

Tyneview is applying for the International School Award, to get recognition for their international work, provide a strong framework moving forward and to continue to develop international partnerships and an international curriculum, as well as deepening local community connections.

"You can see the difference this trip has made to the children. The adventure of travel to a new place, their friendships and confidence, as well as being able to talk about Islam and this being normalized in the school. The experience will live with them for the rest of their lives."
Steve Gittens, Head Teacher



Empowering pupils through global connections:

St Paul's Church of England Primary School, Newcastle



St Paul's Church of England Primary School is in an area of acute social and economic disadvantage, ranked in the 1% most deprived nationally. It has a diverse school community, including 65% of pupils with English as an Additional Language, pupils from countries across the world, diverse local communities and children from Refugee and Asylum-seeking backgrounds. Extreme inequalities negatively impact on pupils' opportunities, aspirations, confidence, self-esteem and education attainment.

To overcome these challenges and overcome inequalities, the school provides a rich and diverse curriculum. By developing a whole-school approach to internationalism, the school is also providing experiences, supporting learning and developing skills to enable children to thrive in a global society. International visits add value to this approach and offer life-changing opportunities for some pupils, who share their experiences with the rest of the school.

Expanding global perspectives through international partnerships

St Paul's first school partnership developed in 2020-21 as a result of a city-wide promotion of supported school links with Newcastle's French twin city, Nancy. There are supportive civic links for school partnerships in both cities and St Paul's hosted the Mayor of Nancy on a visit in 2022 and had a civic welcome at the Town Hall when they visited. The partner matching supported by International Newcastle, Newcastle City Council (School Effectiveness) and DAREIC, France's international education support service, was successful. St Paul's linked with Marcel Leroy in Nancy, which had a shared ethos of valuing individuals and different cultures.

Further support was given to help St Paul's apply to the UK's Turing Scheme and they were awarded funding in 3 successive rounds for visits to Nancy and their partner school. They have built a strong, effective partnership and utilize skills developed during the pandemic to support year-round online learning and virtual collaboration, as well as in person visits. St Paul's has woven their French collaboration throughout their curriculum, developing a programme of activity for every child in the school across all subjects, so everyone benefits from the international link.

Having established skills and experienced the benefits for staff and pupils from international partnership working, St Paul's were keen to enhance the experiences and global perspectives of their pupils. They have introduced a new

link, Church School in Rajkot, India. International Newcastle brokered support from a former teacher who is a specialist in developing links with India to set up the partnership and helped the school to secure Turing funding for a visit to India in 2024. The school is collaborating virtually with their partner school and developing links with the local South East Asian community in Newcastle and in India through shared activities and exploring and celebrating key events in both communities, including religious festivals and cultural activities.

All children in the school will benefit from both of their strong international relationships and opportunities for new intercultural experiences. Cohorts of children will also benefit from the immersive cultural and learning experiences in another country and share learning in their school. These 'real' world-wide links and visits to other countries, help pupils understand that they are global citizens, widening their perspectives and understanding of the opportunities that will impact on their future education, social mobility and career opportunities.

The new link with India will help children see beyond Europe and experience a radically different environment, where people face a range of challenges different to their own. It will help them understand how local and global issues affect themselves and others, as well as to value diversity and respect different faiths, cultures and beliefs by experiencing difference and building relationships with children on another continent.

St Paul's will continue to develop their cultural awareness of France and reflect this across their curriculum, engaging children in French language development as well as themed events with Marcel Leroy where joint work includes the arts, music, PHSE and language activities to develop understanding, knowledge, skills and confidence. Collaborating with and visiting peers in France and India will be a life changing experience for all learners, who would never have this opportunity without Turing support.



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Visit to Nancy in 2023

On their second visit to Nancy, staff built on their experience and pre-visits, ensuring all the information relating to the trip was clearly explained and to provide reassurance to families and pupils that there were no financial barriers to participation and that the trip would be safe and children supported throughout.

Travelling by train was a special experience for the children, as was staying in a hotel with their friends. They enjoyed the warm welcome at their partner school and made new friends, playing and learning together. They spent time in school and shared English story books, with St Paul's pupils reading and supporting younger French pupils to enjoy the stories. They enjoyed guided tours of the city, an interactive storytelling event in the park, visits to key sites and attractions and experiencing total immersion in another culture. Staff and children's confidence in speaking French grew, as did the bonds of friendship and understanding between staff and children across both schools. They also visited Paris and saw in person the major sites of interest they had been learning about, including the Eiffel Tower and the Louvre and a boating trip down the River Seine.

"We saw the children really come alive on the trip. Their confidence soared and they had so many amazing experiences with their friends and supported by our partner school. They gained knowledge and skills that will help them throughout their life. This is something you can't replicate in a classroom."
Bryn Taylor, Deputy Head Teacher

"I learned a lot from French children, especially how they speak and what their school is like. It is just so nice to meet new people from different parts of the world."
St Paul's Pupil



case study

"Participating in this trip has definitely had a positive impact on my child...his face lights up when he talks about it. He is more independent now, which will help when he goes to secondary school."

St Paul's Parent

Embedding internationalism and celebrating language and cultures

St Paul's is already a School of Sanctuary and has started the process of accreditation for British Council's International School Award, to build on its strategic approach to developing internationalism and embedding this across the curriculum to benefit all pupils.

Their language teachers are members of the Newcastle Modern Foreign Language Network, which provides peer support, introduces new opportunities, resources and specialist support.

Teachers have also been engaging pupils in the annual Express Yourself: North East Festival of Languages, co-ordinated by International Newcastle, which celebrates the diverse languages and cultures in the region and our connections to the world. Children have taken part in the Mother Tongue Other Tongue poetry project, live online and pre-recorded activities, as well as in person events, such as Welcome to the Arab World. St Paul's pupils are translating and recording the chorus of the Festival Song for 2024 in over 20 languages that they speak at home, which will be shared with schools across the region to encourage participation.

Their involvement in all these activities supports the celebration of the languages and cultures represented in their school and beyond and adds value to the international dimension of their curriculum and immersive experiences for their pupils.



Bridging cultures, building futures:
The transformative power of international education at
Our Lady and St Anne's Primary School, Newcastle



Our Lady and St. Anne's Catholic Primary School (OLSA) in Newcastle's City Centre is a culturally diverse school. 70% of pupils have English as an Additional Language and many are from Muslim and Refugee and Asylum-seeking backgrounds. The school is in one of the 1% most deprived areas nationally and pupils experience high levels of disadvantage and multiple barriers. The school aims to develop confident, resilient, happy and respectful learners, critical thinkers and problem solvers. They provide a language-rich curriculum to strengthen resilience, foster ambition, remove barriers and increase experiences so that all pupils can achieve their potential.

Broadening horizons and widening access to opportunities

The school developed their first ever international partnership with a primary school in Rome in 2022 and accessed Turing funding to visit in 2023. International Newcastle and Newcastle City Council provided support with initial planning, applying for funding and also the practicalities of preparing for the visit abroad. Without this and Turing Scheme funding, the visit and life-changing experiences for their pupils would have been impossible.

The school wanted pupils to be able to immerse themselves fully into a culture that is different from that of their own, raising their ambitions and boosting their cultural capital and that of the school. The link with Catholicism was also important, with the school partnership and visit benefitting their religious education and whole school ethos in terms of their values and mission.

Advance preparation included a pre-visit to Rome to research the partner school, accommodation, travel and potential itinerary and visits. This was followed up by briefings for pupils and families, including specialist support from their Family Link Worker and interpreter support. Detailed work around travel documentation was required to ensure all pupils could travel abroad and return.

Italian lessons with a teacher from St Cuthbert's Catholic High School helped children get a flavour of the language. They learned about Italy, Rome and its importance in Catholicism, as well as key sites in the city. Pupils also wrote letters to children in their partner school, sharing their excitement about visiting.

Visit to Rome in 2023

OLSA staff and pupils travelled to Rome in May 2023 and received a warm welcome from their partners at, San Pio X Primary School. They learned, played and sang together and made new friends. They visited key sites in Rome, including the Spanish Steps, Trevi Fountain, Pantheon and the Colosseum and learned more about these historic sites. They went to the Vatican attended the Pope Francis' address in St Peter's Square, with translations into English, Arabic and other languages. They also had opportunities to pray and celebrated mass in the English College. Feedback from pupils and parents was overwhelmingly positive.

"I enjoyed making new friends and seeing the contrast, because different people meeting together makes us stronger." OLSA Pupil

"My daughter had a fabulous time, is more adventurous and realised the importance of learning other languages and respecting other cultures." OLSA Parent

The children enjoyed the experience. Despite being nervous about their first trip away without their parents, they were excited to be part of it, felt that they were supported throughout the process. They really enjoyed visiting the school and making new friends, as well as visiting the awe-inspiring heritage and religious sites in Rome. They also loved trying different pizzas and comparing these. They all said they would like to do more travelling to explore the world, different cultures, languages and meet new people.

"It's had a huge impact on the children. They have become more resilient and independent and it has given them the confidence to be able to support their own aspirations, helping with their transition to secondary school." Sam Henzell, Head Teacher

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Expanding internationalism across the school

The school is already a School of Sanctuary and the positive experience and impact of their first international partnership and visit has given them the confidence to apply for British Council's International School Award. OLSA are interested developing more links and embedding internationalism across the curriculum to benefit all students. This includes building on activities around world religions and exploring Bengali, Arabic and other languages and cultures represented in the school. They will enrich their Modern Foreign Languages curriculum by working with Bewick Catholic Education Trust, to introduce more languages and support transition to secondary schools.

Pupils also benefitted from engaging in the Welcome to the Arab World day held at Northumbria University as part of the Express Yourself: North East Festival of Languages 2023. OLSA is looking forward to getting more pupils involved in different language and cultural activities next year. They recognise the added benefit of enabling children to experience student life and a campus environment to raise their aspirations and understanding of what they could do in future.

Global citizens in the making: The impact of international connections at Benton Park Primary School, Newcastle



Benton Park is a culturally diverse primary school in Newcastle, with many pupils coming from disadvantaged backgrounds and facing multiple challenges. There are over 40 languages spoken and the school also has a HIARP (Hearing Impaired Additionally Resourced Provision), where children are offered specialised education with the opportunity to learn alongside their hearing friends. The school's priority is to give children a curriculum that is rich in opportunities, which develops cultural capital and reflects the backgrounds of the children and those of the wider community and world.

Empowering pupils to become global citizens

Benton Park seeks to empower pupils to develop a sense of self as part of an international community, build their communicative skills and helping them become global citizens. The school developed its partnership with L'Ecole Jean Jaures in Nancy, Newcastle's twin city in France, with the support of International Newcastle and the City Council (School Effectiveness) and Nancy colleagues from DAREIC, France's international education department, who visited the school.

Benton Park has since worked with their French partner to build relationships and understanding. Staff and pupils have spent time learning about French culture and history, improving their French language skills and working virtually with their partner school to develop relationships and joint projects, including a Christmas Jumper poster competition. They also exchanged letters in French and English with their partner school.



Visit to Nancy in 2023

In 2022 Benton Park was supported to apply for Turing Scheme funding and were awarded a grant to take a group to Nancy in summer 2023.

Benton Park's cohort for the visit to France had a high level of pupils with Special Educational Needs and Pupil Premium. This visit is something that would have been financially impossible without Turing Scheme funding and support and guidance from International Newcastle and the City Council.

A pre-visit enabled staff to prepare detailed safeguarding plans and risk assessments, travel and accommodation arrangements, visit to their partner school and develop an itinerary for the visit. These were shared through briefings with families and children, with photos and information about what they would be doing and where they would be going. There were regular check-ins with children before and during the trip to ensure pupils felt safe and supported throughout.

"The children had not been away from home or travelled before and the whole trip was a revelation and a life-changing experience for them. It boosted their confidence, resilience and level of independence, as well as giving them new perspectives and inspiring their French language learning."

Mikaela Armstrong, Languages Lead



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Children loved both the train travel and staying in a hotel with their friends and eating out. They enjoyed spending time in the French school and making new friends and did classes, including making crepes. They also met high school students doing a play in English. They explored the city and enjoyed learning about its history, culture and cuisine. They used their French language skills to buy stamps and souvenirs and order food.

A reception by the parents at the school was a special event for the whole group and made them feel very welcome. They also visited Paris and enjoyed seeing the sights.

Parents feedback was positive, saying that the children were more confident and self-reliant and felt that they had achieved something important that they could share with their peers. Teachers reported that children's attitudes to travel and learning languages improved as a result of the trip. Many said they felt more confident about going to High School.

All the children want to do more travelling and explore the world and the trip has made them more interested in finding out about different cultures.

Benton Park will build on their experience of this international link and continue to develop their Modern Foreign Languages and international curriculum.



case study





Further information and links

International Newcastle and Newcastle City Council's School Effectiveness Team collaborate to support all aspects of internationalism in the city's schools.

Opportunities are shared via:

- Services for Schools website and Modern Foreign Language and International Links, EAL and Schools of Sanctuary padlets online (for Newcastle schools only)
- Newcastle Schools Modern Foreign Language Subject Networks for primary and secondary language teachers (co-ordinated by Sarah Edgar with lead teachers)
- newsletter to Head Teachers and direct contact with individual or groups of schools
- International Newcastle's website and social media channels
- Our joint Guide for Schools online [here](#) (and regularly updated)
- Events, workshops and briefings online and in person



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Get involved in Express Yourself: North East Festival of Languages

Visit online:
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