



## **IAF School Links Programme: Information for teachers and schools**

### IAF School Links Programme (ISLP)

The ISLP is a global project, established in 2011 as part of a public awareness campaign for the Mongolian Artificial Nest Project. Over the past few years this programme has grown internationally with the help of dedicated falconers to reach over 5,000 students. The ISLP is part of the IAF Falconry Education Program

The ISLP is specifically aimed at school-aged children, 5 to 17, and youth aged 18 to 30, with the objectives of

1. Raising awareness of falconry heritage
2. Promoting awareness of raptor conservation
3. Highlighting threats to the environment and habitats and encouraging future conservationists
4. Encouraging young people to become sustainable falconers of the future
5. Embedding United Nations Sustainable Development Goals into the programme

This ISLP offers schools the opportunity to link with another school, either nationally or internationally using falconry and raptor conservation as a means of introduction. The ISLP works in collaboration with falconers, falconry clubs, falconry organizations, bird of prey rehabilitation centers and raptor conservation groups. These collaborators are known in the ISLP as 'associates' and each school in the ISLP has an associate attached to them.

### Join the IAF School Links Programme

Through this programme students will learn about falconry and raptor conservation and interact with students in national or international schools. School twinning can enhance the school curriculum and build long-term relationships between children and adults in partner communities. The ISLP is open to all ages, although our experience shows the programme works best with students aged 8 and over.

To join the programme, schools must provide a 'named person' known as a School Link Co-ordinator (SLC). This could be the headteacher, classroom teacher, support worker or parent. It is the responsibility of the SLC to correspond with their link school, the ISLP team and associate falconer.

To join the ISLP please send the name and email of the SLC, the schools name, website and age of students who will take part in the programme to [sarangerel.ich@gmail.com](mailto:sarangerel.ich@gmail.com); [education@iaf.org](mailto:education@iaf.org) The SLC will be contacted by the ISLP team who will discuss potential link schools, either in their own country or internationally. When the school link has been agreed, contact details of the SLC in each school will be exchanged.

### How the ISLP works

An associate will visit your school, with their birds of prey, once or twice within a school year and deliver a presentation on falconry or raptor conservation. These visits will be coordinated by the SLC and associate to fit within the school calendar, specific falconry and raptor conservation events and availability of associate. One of the aims is to introduce falconry to the next generation and encourage interested students to join a local falconry club.

This is an international programme incorporating schools with varied languages, education policies and curriculums. Delivery of ISLP is flexible and there is no set way to teach or implement the project and will ultimately depend on how much time is available. We suggest a minimum of two hours learning time per term or six hours per academic year, to benefit from the project.

Schools presently in the link have presented the programme to students in the following ways;

- Identifying a link class or group of students to study resource topics and communicate with students in their link school.
- Embedding the programme into curriculum. Developing units of work for science, life skills, English, citizenship, humanities art and expressive arts lessons
- As a lunchtime or after school club for interested students
- As a school council activity
- As an end of term class or group activity day
- As part of a gifted and talented initiative
- Used with selected students as part of an additional curriculum

### Educational Resources

Educational resources have been created to give an introduction to falconry and raptor conservation projects taking place in the world. The resources are aimed at 10-11yr olds although they can be easily adapted to suit any age or ability.

The resources are divided into four topic areas: Birds of Prey, Falconry, Falcon Conservation and Research and Art and activities. Each unit of work consists of a PowerPoint and student worksheet with new resources being developed annually.

See <http://schoollinksprogramme.org/resources/> to download and view current resources available to use.

### Communication

Each set of linked school can decide independently how they communicate with each other. We suggest the SLC discuss the frequency and type of communication as soon as the link is created.

Present school in the ISLP use a variety of tools e.g.

- Create a PowerPoint or film about the school and local area. We have staff who can help translate the presentations if the link school is in a different country
- Write pen pal letters and post
- Write pen pal letters and email
- Set up a blog – great for students IT skills
- Arrange Skype calls
- Send photographs and videos of school projects, students work and drama activities
- Share national celebration days and encourage link school to celebrate at the same time
- Share schemes of work related to heritage
- Visit the link school as a school trip

The ISLP team hope that friendships will develop between pen pals and teachers and SLC who will develop their own way to communicate using smart phones, social media or similar outside school time.

To Join the ISLP please contact [sarangerel.ich@gmail.com](mailto:sarangerel.ich@gmail.com); [education@iaf.org](mailto:education@iaf.org)