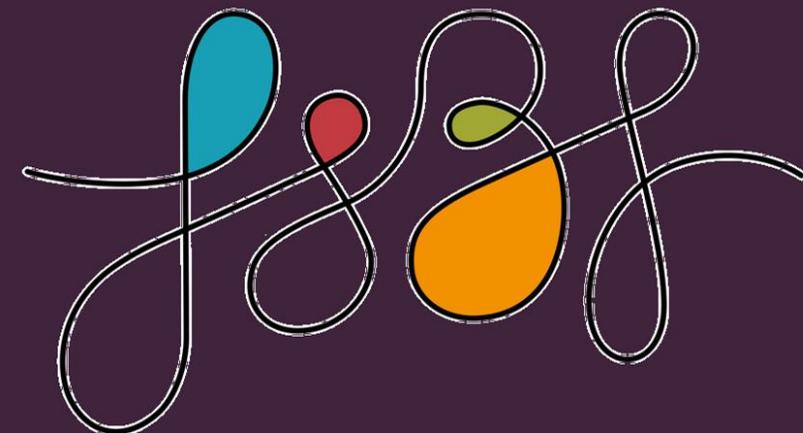


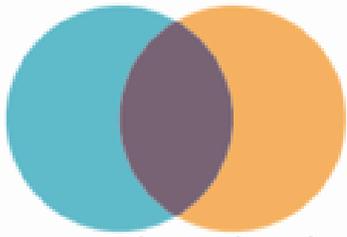
# The Faith & Belief Forum



We are a charity that works in schools, universities and communities to build good relationships between people from different faiths, beliefs and cultures

# SCHOOL LINKING PROGRAMME





**The School Linking Programme matches students and classes from different cultural or faith backgrounds to explore issues of identity, community and belief.**

- The programme is run as part of The Linking Network (national network)
- The programme's focus is to equip teachers with the skills, knowledge and support.
- The teachers are partnered with another teacher and class from a different school to run 3 'Link' encounters over the course of an academic year.

**School Linking is rooted in Social Contact Theory, a field of Social Psychology (Allport, 1954)**

***Research shows that contact between different social groups, especially during childhood and adolescence is powerful in overcoming prejudices.***

Social Contact Theory states the importance of key conditions in reducing prejudice:

- meaningful interaction between individuals
- equal status
- intergroup cooperation & common goals
- enjoyable activity
- supported by authorities



# PROGRAMME AIMS

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## For TEACHERS

1. To be part of an interfaith network, building partnerships with local schools
2. To gain support with curriculum areas (RE, PASHE, SMSC & British Values provision)
3. To be provided with free training resources & interfaith guidance

## For STUDENTS

1. To experience memorable Link Days
2. To gain deeper understanding of different beliefs & increased religious literacy
3. To develop skills of communication, empathy & reflection



# KEY QUESTIONS

- **1. Who am I? Identity**

- ✓ Identity is **individual, complex & fluid**
- ✓ Acknowledging our own identities helps to understand & empathise
- ✓ Greater self-awareness can increase confidence
- ✓ Sharing can help us to value different perspectives
- ✓ Sharing can help to **form genuine connections / build trust & understanding**

- **2. Who are we? Diversity**

- ✓ Everyone else is as complex as I am
- ✓ Groups are as complex as individuals
- ✓ Similarities exist across different groups
- ✓ Diversity exists **within** groups
- ✓ Sometimes differences are overlooked in the name of unity
- ✓ Difference is something to be recognized, navigated and celebrated

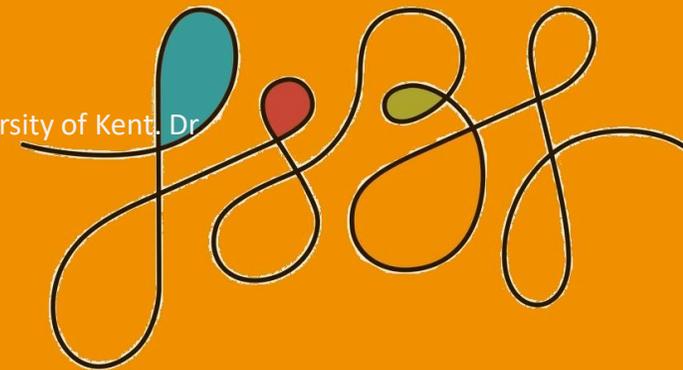
- **3. How do we live together? Community**

- ✓ About **collaboration** and **making a positive difference in society**
- ✓ Exploring how shared spaces among people of different faiths and beliefs **can be inclusive and healthy**

The connections  
that Linking  
creates  
contribute  
towards to:

- Reducing prejudice and stereotyping
- Increasing children's ability to identify common ground and similarity with others
- Reducing anxiety
- Generating new, inclusive friendships
- Unlocking enduring positive feelings about interactions across difference

(These key findings have been provided by Dr Lindsey Cameron from the University of Kent. Dr Cameron has been working with The Linking Network since 2018.)



# FUNDING AND COSTS

- The Linking Programme is available free of charge to schools in Birmingham & Greater London. Schools will need to cover the cost of staff time, travel to link school and venue hire if classes choose to meet at a neutral venue.
- Additionally, schools can access our Suite of KS2 & KS3 ONLINE RESOURCES that are free of charge to all schools.

[Resources - The Faith & Belief Forum \(faithbeliefforum.org\)](http://faithbeliefforum.org)



# CONTACT & FURTHER INFO

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