

TWINS PROGRAM NEWSLETTER

A Message From TWINS...

Welcome to the latest edition of AdoptSriLanka's TWINS Program Newsletter! This issue is packed with highlights from the program over the past few months.

These highlights include the introduction of the Partnership Agreement Toolkit, events such as the Final for the Southern Province Debating Tournament, various visits to Sri Lanka from TWINS abroad and a Conference which focused on strengthening partnerships between the UK and Sri Lanka.

This newsletter also provides you with handy information that can help your school strengthen its link with your Sri Lankan TWIN.

It has been an exciting time for our program as we have seen TWINS transform and develop to reflect the changing needs of the communities we work in.

TWINS initially began in the aftermath of the 2004 Tsunami where schools abroad were linked to schools in Sri Lanka to provide much-needed assistance to replace lost resources. These new links also opened up an opportunity for project and information exchange between schools.

Now, over two and half years on, TWINS has developed in to a new and exciting program which aims to develop partnerships between schools which focus on regular educational exchange between students and teachers.

Thanks for supporting the TWINS program! I hope you enjoy our Newsletter.

Bec Lyons

**General Manager
AdoptSriLanka**

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The AdoptSriLanka TWINS Program

Our Vision

- Promoting global and cultural understanding and awareness
- Recognising and respecting all cultural, ethnic and religious differences
- Engaging and working with local communities
- Discouraging a culture of dependency
- Encouraging mutual benefits for all through long term friendship

Our Objectives

- Cultural and educational exchange through global links
- Child participation through sport and arts events
- The development of rural under-resourced schools through financial assistance



TWINS English Activity Room Handbook for Teachers



Through regular monitoring visits to the TWIN Schools our Field Officers discovered that many English Teachers were unsure of the best ways of utilising their new space.

TWINS will run the first of a series of skill sharing workshops for English Teachers in Sri Lanka at the Galle Literary Festival in January 2008.

These sessions will provide teachers with the opportunity to share their own activities with other teachers as well as try out many of the activities contained in the handbook.

If you would like to share your own activity or lesson plans for this handbook please feel free to email them to:

adoptsrilanka_twins@yahoo.co.uk

Many TWIN schools abroad have generously provided financial assistance through AdoptSriLanka TWINS to develop an English Activity Room at their TWIN School.

English Activity Rooms in Sri Lanka provide students with colourful and interactive learning environments that focus on learning English through fun games and activities.

“English Activity Rooms in Sri Lanka provide students with a colourful and interactive learning environment that focuses on learning through fun games and activities”.

This led our team to develop a handbook for teachers. This handbook contains a guide on how to create an English Activity Room as well as many lesson plans and worksheets that can be used directly in the classroom.



Handy Tamil Phrases



Hello
Goodbye
Thank you
Yes
No
It is nice to meet you
How are you?
Fine, thank you

Va-na-kam
Poi-too va-rayn
Nan-dree
Am-ma-an
Il-le
On-ga-lay Pak-ka San-do-sham
Ep-pa-di iru-ke-ren-ga?
Nall-aa iruk-ken

Handy Sinhala Phrases

How are you?	Kohomada?
Good (response to Kohomada?)	Hondai
Thank you	Istoothie
Formal Greeting	Ayobowan
I'll go and come (goodbye)	Gihen Enung
You go and come (response)	Gihen Enna
Good Morning	Subodasenak
My Name is _____	Mage Nama



Building International Partnerships between Sri Lanka & the UK

UKOWLA CONFERENCE

A conference was held in June that was run in collaboration with AdoptSri Lanka TWINS, the Eden Project and UKOWLA. The conference brought together community based groups and individuals from the UK who have links with partners in Sri Lanka.

UKOWLA was formed in 1984 in response to the growing number of community and school partnerships springing up around the UK. UKOWLA is an umbrella organisation for such partnerships.

Representatives from AdoptSri Lanka TWINS participated in the conference as well as many of our UK based TWIN schools. The conference gave participants the opportunity to learn more about each other and to promote and develop community and school based links between the two countries for a mutual benefit.

Feedback received after the conference has reinforced the importance of establishing a partnership agreement between schools involved in the TWINS program. These agreements help lay a solid foundation for a partnership which is based on mutual

goals and shared responsibility which strives for realistic and meaningful outcomes.

Angela Cook stated:

“The theme has been about children and young people. Listening to our first speakers and listening in on the workshops, it is vital that we educate our children, these links are not just about fundraising and giving, it’s about making real friendships, understanding, learning and being prepared to learn.”

This conference was also run in collaboration with DFID Global School Partnerships (DGSP) program which is delivered by a consortium of the British Council, Cambridge Education Foundation. For more information about this initiative and various funding opportunities visit:

www.britishcouncil.org/globalschools.

Thank you to all the UK based TWIN schools who participated in this conference. It has been wonderful to witness the new burst of enthusiasm that the conference has created.

Some of the comments made by participants when asked what things they planned to do as a result of the conference include:

- “Develop partnership agreement to emphasise curricular / cultural exchange”
- “Investigate local Sri Lankan community to support work in my centre”
- “Meet my headmaster with an action plan”
- “Investigate British Council funding”
- “Go back and enthuse staff”
- “Embed Sri Lanka in new curriculum planning at school”
- “Talk to Headmaster about including link in the school development plan”
- “Find out what learning our school in Sri Lanka would like to do”
- “Join UKOWLA”

To view a full copy of the conference report please visit:

www.ukowla.org.uk/publications/

Establishing a Partnership Agreement with your TWIN

A TWINS Partnership Agreement is a formal agreement which is signed by both TWIN schools.

Each partnership is unique and therefore the agreements should be designed to reflect the needs and goals of the TWIN schools involved.

A TWINS Partnership Agreement ensures that both schools understand what their TWIN school hopes to achieve through their partnership.

It clearly outlines a shared vision for the future, goals for educational exchange and a commitment to fulfil these obligations. This agreement must be developed in partnership with

your TWIN school in order to be effective.

ASL TWINS have recently developed various information guides to assist TWIN schools to formalise their partnership.

This includes:

- a guide to establishing a partnership agreement with your TWIN
- information on funding available to visit your TWIN
- templates for your agreement
- information on establishing a project exchange agreement

Our Field Officers can support your school to develop an agreement in partnership with your TWIN school. Our hope is that all schools involved in the TWINS program will develop these agreements in the coming months.

Effective and equitable partnerships should be based on shared educational goals, regular participation, commitment, inclusiveness and an aim for meaningful and sustainable outcomes.

To get a copy of these useful documents email:

adoptsrilanka_twins@yahoo.co.uk

The TWINS Team

The TWINS Program operates so effectively due to the strength of our team. These dedicated individuals work directly with TWIN schools to develop long term sustainable links. We have recently restructured our team to further enhance our work.

This has included the recent promotion of Pushpitha (previously Region 1 Field Officer) to the Special Projects Coordinator. This new role is in response to the success of the TWINS Interschool Events such as our Debating Tournaments and Creative Writing Competition. Pushpitha will coordinate all TWINS events and provide support to the General Manager of ASL.

Anusha Liyanage has now joined the TWINS team as the Region 1 Field Officer. She brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the program.

Sahan who previously worked as our Building Projects Manager will continue with this role but will also become a Special Projects Officer, helping to coordinate TWINS Events.

The General Manager of ASL Laura Fallowfield has sadly returned to the UK to continue her work as a teacher. Laura has been a great asset to our team and led ASL's projects towards an exciting future. Bec Lyons, the previous TWINS Manager is now the General Manager of AdoptSriLanka.

Our small team continues to develop to better reflect the changing needs of the communities we work in. We all look forward to working with you in 2008 and beyond.



A TWINS Guide to visiting your Sri Lankan TWIN school



AdoptSriLanka Twins have hosted a large number of visitors from TWIN Schools abroad.

This has included Principals, Teachers, Parents and Students. Some stay in Sri Lanka for a considerable time to

volunteer in their TWIN School and find the experience incredibly valuable and rewarding.

The TWINS Team have put together a guide for visitors to Sri Lanka. This guide contains information on Sri Lankan customs, culture, festivals, the school system and what can be expected when visiting a Sri Lankan school.

The guide even has a section to help you learn a few Sinhala phrases!

Email us if you plan to visit Sri Lanka, or would just like to learn more about Sri Lankan culture and we can email you a copy of this guide.

adoptsrilanka_twins@yahoo.co.uk



Visits to Sri Lanka from TWINS Abroad

A visit from a TWIN School from abroad is an incredibly special occasion for Sri Lanka TWIN Schools.

These visits also prove to be very beneficial in strengthening the link and sustainability of a TWINS relationship. Your visit can provide the opportunity to develop a partnership agreement with your TWIN school in Sri Lanka.

Many teachers, principals, parents, students and students on their gap year have visited or are planning to

come to Sri Lanka.

AdoptSriLanka TWINS would like to thank the following schools for coming to Sri Lanka to visit their TWIN:

King's College (Cambridge)
YSGOL Faenol (Wales)
Pymble Ladies College (Aus)
Lincoln Christ Hospital School (UK)
Scots College (Aus)
Ladywell Gym (UK)

Silverdale Primary School (UK)
Morgam Park Education Centre (UK)
Glossopdale Community College (UK)
Walton Priory Middle School (UK)
High Storrs School (UK)
Bilton Grange School (UK)
Cranbrook School (Aus)
Monmouth Cadets (UK)
St. Mathew's School (UK)
Butcombe Preparatory School (UK)
Hose Primary (UK)

TWINS Provincial School Debating Tournament Finals

“Is the study of English essential in making Sri Lanka a modern state?”

“Which has the greater impact on the reduction of crime and violence? Religion or Law?”

“Do the modern tuition classes in Sri Lanka lead to ill-disciplined students?”

“Does women's employment in foreign countries have a positive or negative impact on the country?”

These are just some of the topics recently debated at the TWINS Provincial Schools Debating Tournaments in the Galle, Matara and Tangalle Regions.

Thanks to generous donations in response to our Events Appeal we have been able to host a series of Debating Tournaments throughout the Southern



Child Participation through TWINS Events

One of the aims of the TWINS Program is to run interschool events in Sri Lanka that increase the confidence, skills and participation of students.

These events have include literary competitions, debating tournaments, art exhibitions, workshops and cricket tournaments.

All costs for hosting Twins events historically been fully funded by AdoptSri Lanka's General Funds.

Due to the success of these events and the wonderful feedback we have received from students and teachers,

Province.

In Term 1, the TWINS Debating Tournament for Provincial Schools was held in the Galle region. After the huge success of these events TWINS decided to follow this up in Term 2 with Debating Tournaments in the Tangalle and Matara Regions.

From these finals 6 teams were selected to compete in the inaugural TWINS Program Provincial School Debating Tournament 'Super Six' Final.

Students had the opportunity to compete with neighboring schools and demonstrate their debating skills. The debates enable students to challenge their opinions and practice their public speaking skills while representing their school.

This Tournament Series was the first of its type for provincial schools in the Southern Province.

A teacher accompanying one of the teams said:

“This was the first time that children from provincial schools have had the opportunity to take part in an event of this type. It is wonderful to see such healthy competition between the

we hope to enhance our Events Calendar to now continue with this successful calendar of events.

We are seeking funds through our **Events Appeal** to cover the costs of running these important events in Sri Lanka.

We encourage you to consider that TWIN schools allocate a proportion of their next fundraising event towards events for their TWIN School.

Feedback from schools and the Education Department has shown that such events have a positive effect on

schools and see the students explore and share their opinions on a wide range of subjects.”

A Student from the winning team for the Galle event said:

“This has been a great opportunity for students from rural schools to demonstrate their talents. We thank the organisers and we hope there will be more events so we can develop our skills further and shine.”

This event aimed to give young people a voice and have their opinions heard. The final debate was broadcast on a national radio program in Sri Lanka enabling the opinions of the participants to reach all corners of the country. The Debating Tournament will continue to be a regular item on the TWINS events calendar.

TOURNAMENT RESULTS

‘Super Six’ TWINS Debating Final

1st H/ Polommaruwa Model School

2nd G/ Katukurunda Dharmika M V

3rd M/ Godauda M V

Best Tournament Debater:

M.A. Lakmina Nuwan, H/ Polommaruwa

students learning development, well being and morale. If you would like to make a donation to run TWINS events please email:

adoptsrilanka_twins@yahoo.co.uk



The British High Commissioner of Sri Lanka visits a TWIN School Diary of a Field Officer—Pushpitha Jayasekare

It is a sunny day with no clouds. I feel excited and proud of today's program as I will be taking the British High Commissioner to one of my TWIN schools.

The British High Commissioner of Sri Lanka, Mr. Dominick Chilcott had emailed me a week ago and informed me of his wish to visit Dikkumbura Sri Siddhartha School (DSS).

DSS is twinned with Kings College School in Cambridge. The Principal of Kings Mr. Nicholas Robinson has invited Mr. Chilcott to be the Chief Guest of their School Annual Prize Giving. Before Mr. Chilcott visit Kings School he was very happy to pay a visit to their Sri Lankan TWIN DSS.

Mr. Chilcott arrived to Ahangama railway Station at 12 noon. My manger Ms. Bec and I were there to pick him

up from the station. We then all started the tour to Dikkumbura village. On the way Ms. Bec, Mr. Chilcott and I had a deep chat about TWINS program.

We entered the school at 12.20 and were warmly welcomed by the School Principal and the School's TWINS coordinator. All of us went to the school office and had a chat with the Principal and staff. I introduced Mr. Chilcott to everybody.

At the time we arrived they had started their Poson Celebrations with lots of traditional songs and dances. We all enjoyed it at the main hall. Then Mr. Chilcott looked at the TWINS Notice Board displaying projects exchanged between DSS and Kings.

After that they took us to the Home Science Section and they had arranged us a delicious fruit table. We all

tasted it and it was really nice. As soon as we finished our refreshments, the College Western band treated the British High Commissioner with a live band performance. Mr. Chilcott was very happy with it and he didn't forget to inspect some donated band instruments from Kings.

Then he had a tour around the school with us. He visited Computer room and he was impressed with the set up there. Then he put his note on the visitor's book and said "goodbye" to DSS.



Profile of a Field Officer—Pushpitha Jayasekare



Village: Midigama

Education:

Got through A/Ls in Mathematical stream at Mahinda College, Galle.

Then entered to NAITA and completed Computer Analysis course in two years. Then I completed Advanced Diploma in Telecommunication Engineering at the institute of City & Guilds, London. Also, I have followed Upper Intermediate English Language Course at The British Council, Sri Lanka.

Hobbies: Singing and listening songs

Other interests: Sea bathing, playing my "Congo" drum

If you could travel anywhere in the world where would you go and why?

UK- To see river Thames and the Victo-

ria Square. I also like to travel to Switzerland and Australia

Who do you admire and why?

My parents—I know how they earn their living to feed us (me and 2 sisters) . They made our future clearer. Now they have brought us to a stable level of our lives. All of these are because of my parents. Always I love them and protect them.

How long have you been working with Twins: 18 months

What other work have you done (with ASL or other organizations):

I worked in Lanka Bell Pvt Ltd for five years as a Telecommunication Technical Officer. There I had to monitor all the radio networked links in whole Sri Lanka.

What is your favorite thing about working with ASL?

I am very happy to work with children. With Twins I can help a huge number of SL children at once. My job is always rewarding.

How do you think Twins benefits students in Sri Lanka and abroad?

This is a great opportunity for SL students to share their knowledge with overseas students and vice versa. While exchanging some interesting information about some topics overseas students are generous to contribute some resources for SL schools which value a lot. It makes the educational process of SL schools more efficient and comfortable.

Pushpitha has now taken on the role of Special Projects Coordinator and will be responsible for coordinating the TWINS Calendar of events such as debating, creative writing, school band competitions and art competitions. A profile of Anusha, the new Region 1 Field Officer as well as our other 3 TWINS Field Officers will soon be available for viewing on our website www.adoptsrilanka.com

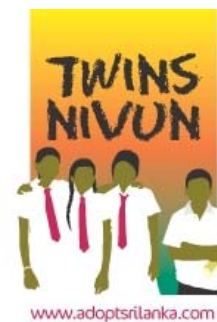
Twins Project Exchange Ideas

We have seen some really innovative projects being exchanged between TWIN Schools recently!

These projects go along way to strengthening the relationships between TWIN Schools and have become a valued element of the TWINS Program.

A huge thanks must go to all the students and TWINS Coordinators who The TWINS Team have prepared a series of guides to help teachers prepare and exchange meaningful projects with their TWIN school.

- **My School**
- **My Community**
- **National Identity and Values**
- **Festivals of My Country**
- **Traditional Recipe Book**
- **Stamp Collecting**
- **Global Footprint**
- **Perceptions vs Reality**
- **Artwork on Global Issues**
- **Poverty around the World**
- **Plants in my Community**
- **Ecological Footprint**



DID YOU KNOW...

Your TWINS Field Officer can email you TWINS Project Plans and Agreement Forms which can help you develop your next project with your TWIN School!

AdoptSriLanka TWINS has moved!

**AdoptSriLanka TWINS
Kikili House
32/5 Lower Dickson Road,
Galle, Sri Lanka**

A Big Thanks from the TWINS Team



TWINS Team Members from Back Left:

Samanthi (Region 3 Field Officer), Bec (General Manager ASL), Janaka (Accountant), Lisa (Office Administration Manager), Pushpitha (Special Projects Coordinator), Sahan (Building Projects Manager), Sajeewani (Region 3 Field Officer) and Saman (Region 2 Field Officer)

**Please note: Anusha the new TWINS Field Officer for Region 1 is not in this photograph*